



THE CENTURY RECITER

THE
CENTURY RECITER

HUMOROUS,
SERIOUS, AND
DRAMATIC SELECTIONS

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INTRODUCTION.

HINTS TO RECITERS.

It is not proposed to do any more in this place than to discuss a few general principles relative to the Art of Reciting. Those who have learned to recite at school, or who, gifted with a natural taste and aptitude for the Art, have studied the methods employed by elocutionists on the public platform, need no elaborate treatise to enable them to carry on their education. In their case a few broad hints, carefully acted upon in the presence of a candid friend, will suffice. To become a reciter worthy the name involves a course of study no less arduous than if the same individual desired to excel in painting, music, or any other of the Sister Arts. Even poets, who are born, not made, have to conform to certain established rules of versification, without which all their genius would go for nothing. No one ever learned to recite from books alone, any more than one can learn to sing, paint, carve a statue, write poetry, or compose music; but granted the possession of the all-important faculty, a good text-book on the subject is very helpful. For the amateur who wishes to edify his neighbours at a smoking concert with a recitation, simply because he has heard a particularly effective piece delivered elsewhere, or from motives of personal vanity, all the instruction in the world can avail him nothing if he have it not in him to become a reciter. Such a one would be wise to leave reciting severely alone. On the other hand, there is no reason why the youth who has been taught to recite fairly well with his hands behind his back, or the self-taught amateur with a decided aptitude for the Art, should not be put in the way of improving his delivery by observing a few simple rules.

The chief heads to be embraced in any treatise on Elocution are: Articulation, Pronunciation, Pause, Emphasis, Pitch, and Gesture. Let us consider these individually.

Articulation.—This is a matter of primary importance to the amateur reciter. Not only every word, but every syllable and every letter of every word must be clearly and perfectly articulated. "A good articulation," says Sheridan, in his *Art of Reading*, "consists in giving every letter in a word its due proportion of sound, according to the most approved custom of pronouncing it, and in making such a distinction between the syllables of which the words are composed, that the ear shall, without difficulty, acknowledge their number, and perceive at once to which syllable such letter belongs. Where these points are not observed, the articulation is proportionally defective." It is too much the habit of people to slur over their words, and make one word run into another, so as to obscure their sense. Every syllable should be like a clean-cut carving, instead of presenting fuzzy edges. And the introduction of unnecessary sounds between words is as much to be condemned as the wanton suppression of those sounds which rightly belong to the component letters of each word. The great majority of half-educated people cannot speak a sentence without making use of a preparatory "Oh-er," and dropping an objectionable "ah" between their words. Where this is the case, good articulation, i.e., distinctness of speech and clearness of meaning, is impossible; likewise where people habitually speak through their teeth, or use their lips too sparingly, so that the words slip out of their mouths uncontrolled. The lips should always be brought into use with vigour and deliberation. Great care should also be taken to articulate with precision such letters as occur at the end of one word, and again, at the beginning of the next. Thus, "the first stage" must not be sounded like "the first age"; "the poet's sigh" like "the poet's eye," or "the confusion of sects is bewildering" like "the confusion of sexes bewildering." Quite as important is the perfect articulation of the final letter in the conjunction "and." One can scarcely be too careful to avoid such slipshod expressions as "hooks an' eyes," "by an' by," "odds an' en's," "tops an' bottoms," "up an' down," etc. The present participle, too, requires almost as much attention on the part of the would-be correct speaker as the aspirate—the misuse of which is proverbial. Badly-educated people in the open country may be excused their "goin' home," "good mornin'," etc., but not so the dwellers in cities and towns in these advanced times. As to the aspirate, the story told by Dean Alford of the draw-

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ing master of the Military Academy at Woolwich will bear repeating. One day, when one of his pupils had drawn a view of Venice, it was submitted to his scrutinising eyes as "A View of Vennice." "Why, what a fool you must be," said he. "Don't you know there's only one hen in Venice?" "That must make it bad there for eggs, then," retorted the pupil. It is a very old joke to assert that though an aitch may be dropped in the place, it will be sure to find its way into another. He who aims at correct speaking exercises no charity towards such slaughterers of the English language; for the educated ear is as much offended by an unaccustomed sound as is the eye by bad spelling. But to return to articulation in general. Like a child learning to read, so should the amateur reciter set himself a few simple lessons, and master them under the guidance of a candid friend. By this means he will very soon acquire the habit of giving every syllable he utters its proper sound, sense, and value. The charm of good speaking consists wholly in perfect articulation. The drawl of the upper classes is to a large extent attributable to their over-laboured articulation; they prefer to err on the right side. Slovenly in speech they never are, however much their apparent affectation may excite the ridicule of the masses.

Pronunciation.—This is the second great point to be borne in mind by the reciter. Nothing is so glaring, or bespeaks so completely a defective education, as the mispronunciation of terms. And if this is so in the course of our every-day life, how much more must it be when a mispronounced word slips out edgeways on a public platform? We once heard the chairman at a local scientific lecture introduce the lecturer in these words: "Having said so much, I have very great pleasure in calling upon Professor So-and-So to give us his lecture on 'The Alpine Glaciers.'" There was wholesale tittering among the audience at this announcement; it created almost as great a sensation as when a certain alderman, at a City banquet, proposed a toast to "The Three R's: Readin', 'Ritin', and 'Rithmetic.'" But the word *glacier* is by no means the only one in our language that presents a pitfall for the unwary. The only possible safeguard for the amateur is to make a point of always looking up a word in his dictionary concerning which he entertains the slightest doubt, and always to rehearse privately in the hearing of his candid friend that which he intends to recite in public. This is all the more imperative when he attempts to recite prose, because, in the case of verse, the rhythm and the rhyme are great aids to pronunciation. If it is not given to every one to be a classical scholar, the correct pronunciation of classical names should at least be mastered by every one who aspires to address an audience. Geographical terms, again, often serve as stumbling-blocks to the uninitiated. For example, the North American State of Manitoba should not be pronounced, as it usually is, *Manitoba*, but *Manitobar*: while the aborigines of New Zealand would probably be inclined to swear in their own language on hearing themselves described as *Maoories* instead of *Maheries* (Maories). All such difficulties should be easily removed by reference to a Gazetteer, or even an up-to-date dictionary. Lastly, aristocratic and other family names call for the most careful attention on the part of the amateur reciter. These may often be met with in prose recitations, and well it will be to avoid making the judicious grieve to hear them maltreated in public. To cite a few examples at random: Cholmondeley is pronounced Chumley; St. John, Sinjun; Cockburn, Coburn; Colquhoun, Cohoon; Majoribanks, Marchbanks; Beauchamp, Beecham; Kuollys, Knowles; Mainwaring, Mannering, etc. etc.

Pause.—It is a very common mistake to imagine that a reader, speaker, or reciter should drop his voice at every comma he meets with on the printed page, and there only. The object of the commas in printing is primarily to mark the syntactical divisions of a sentence; one might almost say that all the words between commas are parenthetical. But such commas, or grammatical pauses as they are called, are to a great extent beside the purpose of reading or speaking aloud. In addition to these, there are what bear the name of rhetorical pauses, which every intelligent reader or speaker can discover for himself. As Walker truly observes: "Not half the pauses are found in printing which are heard in the pronunciation of a good reader or speaker." If it were not for these rhetorical pauses many fine passages in our literature could never be delivered at a single breath, because the grammatical pauses they contain are altogether too far apart. Hence, in the exact proportion as a reader or speaker is able to form a correct judgment regarding the rhetorical pauses, the grammatical pauses can be ignored. And if the amateur reciter is unable to make his rhetorical pauses intelligibly, he may rest assured that reciting is not his *forte*. One of the greatest faults of the amateur reciter is his habit of dropping his voice, not only at every comma, but also at a semicolon and colon, where it should be sustained. A pause there should be, but the voice should not (except in a few rare cases) be allowed to drop. At a full stop the voice should of course be dropped, and a pause observed of a longer duration than elsewhere. Many reciters make no appreciable pause at the end of a sentence, but hurry on to the next. A good point can often be made by pausing slightly at the penultimate word of a sentence. Where such points occur to a writer, they are generally indicated by a dash; but a reciter of intelligence should be able to discover them for himself. There is a tendency nowadays to introduce far too many of these dashes, notably in bearing out plain William Cobbett's contention that those writers who use dashes do not know how to punctuate. If we compare the plays of Goldsmith, Sheridan, Lytton, etc., with those of our own day,

we shall find that the former are singularly devoid of dashes and italicised words. The misuse of italics brings us to the next point in the study of Elocution, viz.—

Emphasis.—Mr. W. H. Pollock, in a recent number of *The Theatre*, has defined Emphasis as “a word for a thing that rightly used may give life to seemingly dead stuff, and wrongly used may take all the radiance out of lines brilliant with light.” Emphasis is a matter appealing entirely to the individual taste and judgment of the reciter; it would be futile to attempt to lay down any strict rule for his guidance. Even the most popular actors will occasionally be found to throw true emphasis to the winds in passages that call for no more than ordinary intelligence for their proper reading. By laying stress upon the wrong word, the sense of a passage or sentence is entirely altered. A good illustration of this is afforded by the following legend displayed in a country barber’s window: “What do you think I give you a shave and a glass of beer all for a penny.” It will be observed that the catch in this consists in the absence of stops, but these occur naturally wherever a word is emphasised. Let us take an illustration of another kind: “The force of the waves was tremendous.” When the last word in the sentence is emphasised there can be no doubt of its meaning; but if the emphasis is laid upon the second word, it implies that the height of the waves was not so tremendous as their force. A still better effect is gained by placing the word “tremendous” first in the sentence. This is one great use of inversion, so common in poetry; though, like many other things excellent in moderation, it is liable to be grossly abused. Modern versifiers generally fall into a habit of italicising the word upon which they think emphasis ought to be laid. This is as unpardonable as the misuse of dashes already alluded to. An intelligent reader or reciter needs no such aids for his delivery. Again, much of the barnstorming of inferior actors is due to the stress which they lay upon entire sentences where really the voice should be dropped. Witness this passage where Othello greets Desdemona on his return from across the seas:

“O my soul’s joy!
If after every tempest come such calms,
May the winds blow till they have waken’d death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus-high; and duck again as low
As hell’s from heaven.”

This should be delivered with all tenderness; but most actors have an idea that they should rant and storm agreeably to the words put into their mouths. We remember also a so-called professional reciter who worked himself up into a fine frenzy towards the close of Longfellow’s “King Robert of Sicily”:

“I am an Angel, and thou art the King.”

True enough, this “grand situation” afforded him a most effective (if somewhat premature) exit; but an elocutionist not so wise in his own conceit would have delivered the line less bombastically, and, moreover, would have remained to give the concluding half-dozen lines of the poem. No angel would shout and rant. His words would be emphasised, but with dignity.

Pitch.—It is quite unnecessary to say much under this head. Not that the subject is unimportant—far from it. How important it is will be gathered from the dictum of the great Mrs. Siddons, that there are forty distinct emotions to be expressed by the exclamation “Ah!” The amateur reciter cannot do better than to put this theory into practice. “Come here!” is another serviceable illustration of the same kind. Such exercises are impossible on paper; they must be set *videlicet*. The varying pitch required for these effects is totally distinct from that which determines the quality of sound, so that the reciter shall make himself heard with distinctness in all parts of the hall. To pitch his voice too high or too low at the outset of his delivery is equally unfortunate; he should endeavour to preserve a happy mean. Yet having commenced to speak, it is not so difficult to raise his pitch as to lower it; this he will do almost unconsciously as he proceeds. If, therefore, he is at a loss to know how to pitch his voice, he will do well to commence in a low voice, and address himself, as it were, to his candid friend, who, by raising or lowering his hand at the further end of the hall, can render him all the assistance he needs.

Gesture.—By this term is meant much more than “suiting the action to the word.” It comprehends all the motions and attitudes of the body, the carriage of the head, the disposition of the hands and fingers, the management of the feet, the movements of the eyes, and all the different expressions of which the countenance is capable. Gesture is to elocution what light and shade are to a picture; without it the most perfect delivery must necessarily be as dull as ditch-water. When the untaught amateur essays to recite he generally throws his arms about at every word he utters, or saws the air after the manner condemned by Hamlet in his “Advice to the Players.” “What shall I do with my hands?” is the perpetual trouble of a bad actor: of a novice always. To know how to dispose of them so that they shall not obtrude themselves when action on his part is undesirable is certainly no easy matter for a beginner. On the modern stage the ordinary cup-and-saucer actor finds his pockets,

INTRODUCTION.

a table, a chair, etc., very convenient to enable him to carry off the awkwardness he feels: but put such a one into a costume play, and he will find himself hopelessly at sea. To obviate this difficulty, and to save themselves much trouble, the masters of our middle-class schools were formerly accustomed to teach their pupils to recite with their hands behind their backs. Assuredly the scene between Brutus and Cassius delivered in this style would afford small entertainment to a cultured audience nowadays; though, if the elocution were good, it might be even preferable to the spout-and-handle attitudes of the average modern reciter. The first thing to be impressed upon every would-be reciter is to learn how to keep in repose. Let him cultivate the habit of standing erect in an easy manner; free from all shuffling of the feet, placing his arms akimbo, dallying with his watch-chain, putting his hands up to his face, or into his pockets, or behind his back, planting one foot behind the other, turning his toes inward, spreading his legs abroad in imitation of the Colossus of Rhodes, jerking or nodding his head, or rolling his eyes about after the fashion of a Christy Minstrel. It is not meant by this, of course, that he should allow his arms to hang helplessly down his sides. In general, when no active movement is called for, the right arm should be raised to a level with his elbow, the latter being held close to the body, and the index finger of the hand extended. At the same time, great care should be taken to avoid any unseemly aspect of the left hand; it should neither be clenched nor held rigidly against the thigh, like a raw recruit standing at ease. With regard to Action, if the reciter enters into the spirit of the Author at all (assuming him to have mastered the text, line for line, and word for word), appropriate action will very soon suggest itself. "All action," says Tyrrell, "must be suggested by the sense of the production which he is delivering, and any movement that does not naturally arise out of it is inconsistent and erroneous. If you feel a poem, and deliver it with energy, you will be sure to employ action which is not very inappropriate, and redundancies and awkward peculiarities are best got rid of by practising before a judicious friend. True purity and dignity of action is a collection of

'Nameless graces which no methods teach,
And which a master's hand alone can reach,'

and which nothing but a long experience and correct judgment can impart."

This brings us back to the point from which we set out, viz., that no one ever learned to recite from books alone. The book, in conjunction with a master, or his equivalent, the candid friend, may be very helpful: but the learner's chief reliance must be the unremitting study and practice that he imposes upon himself; without which all such aids are vain.

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

LONDON,

August 1895.

THE CENTURY RECITER.

IF I COULD KEEP HER SO.

Just a little baby, lying in my arms—
Would that I could keep you with your baby
charms;

Helpless, clinging fingers, downy, golden hair,
Where the sunshine fingers, caught from other-
where;

Blue eyes asking questions, lips that cannot speak,
Roly-poly shoulders, dimple in your cheek;
Dainty little blossom in a world of woe,
Thus I fain would keep you, for I love you so.

Roguish little damsel, scarcely six years old,
Feet that never weary, hair of deeper gold;
Restless, busy fingers, all the time at play,
Tongue that never ceases talking all the day;
Blue eyes learning wonders of the world about,
Here you come to tell them—what an eager
shout!

Winsome little damsel, all the neighbours know,
Thus I long to keep you, for I love you so.

Sober little schoolgirl, with your strap of books,
And such grave importance in your puzzled looks;
Solving weary problems, poring over sums,
Yet with tooth for sponge-cake and for sugar
plums;

Reading books of romance in your bed at night,
Waking up to study with the morning light;
Anxious as to ribbons, deft to tie a bow,
Full of contradictions—I would keep you so.

Sweet and thoughtful maiden, sitting by my side,
All the world's before you, and the world is wide;
Hearts are there for winning, hearts are there to
break,

Has your own, shy maiden, just begun to wake?
Is that rose of dawning glowing on your cheek,
Telling us in blushes what you will not speak?
Shy and tender maiden, I would fain forego
All the golden future just to keep you so.

Ah! the listening angels saw that she was fair,
Ripe for rare unfolding in the upper air;
Now the rose of dawning turns to lily white,
And the close-shut eyelids veil the eyes from
sight;

All the past I summon as I kiss her brow—
Babe and child, and maiden, all are with me now,
Though my heart is breaking, yet God's love I
know—

Safe among the angels, I would keep her so.

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

THE SIEGE OF LUCKNOW.

A TALE of the Siege of Lucknow though the years
have rolled away
It is fresh in my memory still—like a story of
yesterday.

'Twas the terrible mutiny time, when the fierce
fanatical hordes
Rose,—and nought to withstand but the flash of a
handful of swords,

Only a handful of men stood shoulder to shoulder
sore smitten,
Fighting for country and Queen, and bearing the
banner of Britain.

They had hemmed us in, trapped us in Lucknow;
wherever the outlook there came
The roar of their rifles and cannon: the signs of
the circle of flame.

Wot ye well 'mid that weariful leaguer that high
deeds of daring were done;
But how could we break out from the place when
the foe was a thousand to one?

And the ring of dark faces was there from the
earliest flush of the light,
While their sentinels held us on guard through the
long monotonous night.

But keen was the foe and alert and hyæna-like
hungered for prey;
And the list of the dead and dying grew longer
from day to day.

And day after day went on, and weary we were,
and worn;
With never a realisation at night of the hope of
morn.

And our store of food ran short—and our brave
defenders then—

Cried, "Give it the women and children, we can but die like men."

Like men they died. You honoured their deeds with tears and laurels at home :

There never were nobler heroes in the mightiest days of Rome.

As I saw it all then, I can see it now, and oft in the still midnight,

I hear the ring of the rifles, and the fearsome din of the fight ;

I hear the wailing of children, and the moaning of men in pain ;

I see what the siege of Lucknow burnt in upon my brain ;

And my pulses fail and my heart stands still so real the vision seems,

Of each terrible hour that yet has power to reddens all my dreams.

Then the last day came as we thought : and death seemed fairer still

Than the fate which might one day be ours if the foe had his will.

And I turned to the man who loved me, and I said—"By our plighted troth,

By the love that we bear each other, now swear me a resolute oath ;

When the last onset comes, you will keep me one cartridge ;—you understand :

And save me ; and kill me. O love ! 'Twill be best that I die by your hand."

Then he bent down and kist me and promised, while the words that he spoke will remain

Engraven for aye on my heart ; until death re-unites us again.

Our men with the strife were spent, and we felt that the end was come,

We could only watch them with straining eyes, and our lips were dumb

Save only for prayer : and the pitiless sun in the hot blue sky looked down

On hapless men and women, and the fierce insurgent town.

So the day drew on to a close, and it seemed far sweeter to die ;

When a Scotch girl—there in the corner laid prostrate—rose with a cry

Of "Dinna ye hear it? the pipes! The Highlanders come to save!"

And we listened, but all was stillness ; a silence as of the grave.

She was weary and worn with fasting, what wonder we sighed, and thought—

Poor girl she raves in her sleep, 'tis the cry of a woman distraught.

Then again the muskets rang out, and we listened with bated breath

For the last and the fatal onset ; deliverance only in death.

But again she rose ! and "Dinna ye hear it!" once more she cried,

"The pipes! I had never thought to hear them again ere I died.

They mind me of dear old Scotland, the land of the heath and the hill ;

Of the rowan and purple heather and many a bonnie brown rill.

It is the sound of the pibroch ! I know 'tis the Highlanders !"

And we listened. But no ! our ears were not so keen as hers.

But hark ! There surely were sounds on the fierce hot evening air ;

And again we held our breath, while our hearts went out in prayer.

Yes ! yes ! It was true ! She was right ! For the sound came nearer still ;

The pipes rang out on the night with a piercing voice and shrill !

And with them there came the tramp we had listened so long for : and then

We heard "The Campbells are coming,"
The march of the Highland men !

Then we saw the waving tartan : and the glimmer of steel outline,

Ah me ! How our hearts had ached for a sight of that ordered line.

And then the peril was ended : and the sorrow was overpast.

They had raised the leaguer of Lucknow ! and we knew we were saved at last !

And the foul foe knew to his cost in that night of ruin and wrack,

The strength of the soldiers of England 'neath the banner that never goes back.

II. SAVILE CLARKE.

Specially written for Miss AMY ROSELLE, and recited by her at the Empire Theatre.

[Note.—It will be observed that a piano may be used with good effect during this recitation.]

MELANCHOLETTA.

With saddest music, all day long

She soothed her secret sorrow :

At night she sighed "I fear 'twas wrong

Such cheerful words to borrow.

Dearest, a sweeter, sadder song

I'll sing to thee to-morrow."

I thanked her, but I could not say

That I was glad to hear it :

I left the house at break of day,

And did not venture near it

Till time, I hoped, had worn away

Her grief, for nought could cheer it !

My dismal sister ! couldst thou know
The wretched home thou keepest !
Thy brother, drowned in daily woe,
Is thankful when thou sleepest ;
For if I laugh, however low,
When thou'rt awake, thou weepest !

I took my sister t'other day
(Excuse the slang expression)
To Sadler's Wells to see the play,
In hopes the new impression
Might in her thoughts, from grave to gay
Effect some slight digression.

I asked three gay young dogs from town
To join us in our folly,
• Whose mirth, I thought, might serve to drown
My sister's melancholy :
The lively Jones, the sportive Brown,
And Robinson the jolly.

The maid announced the meal in tones
That I myself had taught her,
Meant to allay my sister's moans
Like oil on troubled water :
I rushed to Jones, the lively Jones,
And begged him to escort her.

Vainly he strove, with ready wit,
To joke about the weather—
To ventilate the last *on dit*—
To quote the price of leather—
She groaned " Here I and Sorrow sit :
Let us lament together ! "

I urged " You're wasting time, you know :
Delay will spoil the venison."
" My heart is wasted with my woe !
There is no rest—in Venice, on
The Bridge of Sighs ! " she quoted low
From Byron and from Tennyson.

I need not tell of soup and fish
In solemn silence swallowed,
The sobs that ushered in each dish,
And its departure followed,
Nor yet my suicidal wish
To be the cheese I hollowed.

• Some desperate attempts were made
To start a conversation ;
• " Madam," the sportive Brown essayed,
" Which kind of recreation,
Hunting or fishing, have you made
Your special occupation ? "

• Her lips curved downwards instantly,
As if of india-rubber.
• " Hounds in full cry I like," said she :
(Oh how I longed to snub her !)
" Of fish, a whale's the one for me,
It is so full of blubber ! "

The night's performance was " King John."
" It's dull," she wept, and so so ! "
A while I let her tears flow on,
She said they soothed her woe so !
At length the curtain rose upon
" Bombastes Furioso."

In vain we roared ; in vain we tried
To rouse her into laughter :
Her pensive glances wandered wide
• From orchestra to rafter—
" Tier upon tier ! " she said, and sighed ;
• And silence followed after.

LEWIS CARROLL.

By permission of the Author.

TWO BATTLES.

A SOLDIER'S STORY.

THERE are men whose chiefest pleasure
Is to sit at women's knees,
Finding love their toil and leisure :
I was never one of these.
Hardy muscles best content me,
Deeds of strength, and battle's flames ;
Nature's moulding never meant me
For a dainty squire of dames ;
Wrought my features of a fashion
Useless for the gallant's part ;
Gave me nerve and burning passion ;
Gave, I fear, a stubborn heart.

Yet, when five-and-forty winters
Crown'd a visage seamed with scars
And a body scored with splinters
Gather'd in the Indian wars,
Chance impell'd me to discover
One who pleased my fancy well,
Till the time I grew to love her
With a love I fear to tell.
Never lag'd a suitor surier
In the race where love is fleet :
Not the less the grim old warrior
Found her sweetness passing sweet.
And my years were ripe and sober,
But to look on Lucy Deane
Flush'd and fired my life's October
In the May of seventeen.
Lucy Deane, whose father rented
Some waste acres of a lea
By a headland scarr'd and dinted,
Frowning on the German Sea.
Waving chalk-downs, bare of tillage,
Sloped for barren miles away ;
Near at hand the fisher-village
Dosed throughout the sluggish day.
She, her father's only daughter,
Had the nature strong men prize :
Soft as starlight on the water
Was the beauty of her eyes.

I, on leave of absence staying
 For the health the sea-breeze yields,
 Found my footsteps often straying
 O'er the farmer's scanty fields
 To the stead where she resided ;
 And, whene'er I came, the best
 Of their welcome they provided
 Gladly for their soldier guest.
 But despite his generous striving,
 Well I knew the farmer's state :
 All his pinching and contriving
 Could not make the small store great.
 Yearly harvests still decreasing,
 Blight and murrain, plague and rot,
 Brought the worries seldom ceasing
 That await the poor man's lot.
 Yet, most gentle in his duty,
 Lucy labour'd, strong with youth ;
 Poverty marr'd not her beauty,
 Trouble could not harm her truth.
 Health, such as the toiler gathers,
 Help'd them in their upward road.

Frank, a nephew of her father's,
 Made the third in that abode.
 Cousin Frank, whose years might number
 Twenty, somewhat near her own,
 Waked me from my passion-slumber,
 And I saw her face had grown
 Kindlier for his coming, softer
 When his absence left her moved ;
 Then more certainly and often
 Came the tokens that they loved :
 Loved, although they guess'd it little,
 And it pain'd me little yet.
 Love in youth, I thought, is brittle :
 I may bring her to forget
 Such a fancy, if his features
 Absent are recall'd in vain :
 Then to trust wealth's chance, and Nature's
 For the heart I hope to gain.

Something lofty was his spirit,
 Such as grows more great in strife ;
 And he scorn'd his humble merit
 And the sauciness of his life ;
 Mused upon the soldier's glory,
 Sigh'd for that which battles yield,
 Roused him when I told the story
 Of old dangers in the field.
 And I saw the flame he cherish'd ;
 Fann'd it till it grew a fire ;
 Fed it with all words that nourish'd
 Power and force in his desire.
 " Shall the strength," I cried, " God-given,
 Waste itself on spade and plough,
 When the laurel may be riven
 From the foeman's meaner brow ?
 Leave to lowly human cattle
 Fields to harrow, yokes to wear,
 But a Man's place is the battle,
 His the toil that soldiers bear."

When my words had moved him greatly,
 Cautiously to Farmer Deane,
 " Frank," I said, " has wearied lately :
 All too dull his life has been.
 Higher aims entrance his vision ;
 Let his freer soul expand ;
 I will give him a commission
 In the troop at my command.
 If you fear to lose his labour,
 Let me pay you what is due
 As a tenant ; take me, neighbour,
 In your house the whole year through."

At my pleading he consented
 With a glad yet tardy grace ;
 And a yearly home I rented
 In my darling's dwelling-place ;
 Made of Frank a soldier ; moved him
 To his regiment far away ;
 Lucy, howsoe'er she loved him,
 Saw him rarely from that day.
 There I pass'd my furloughs often ;
 Press'd her with such tender tongue
 As I hoped her heart might soften,
 Wooing late, and wooing long.
 " Though your father's store be scanty,
 Love," I said, " will ampler make
 These poor fortunes : I have plenty :
 Love me for your father's sake."
 Doubting in her half abated
 At my words ; hope seem'd not far ;
 And I pleaded and I waited
 Till the world awoke to war.

War broke o'er the East ; its thunder
 Roll'd upon our western way.
 Cannon cleft the skies asunder.
 England arm'd her for the fray.
 War with deadliest roar and rattle
 Urged the Russian's stern advance ;
 And the clarion of the battle
 Roused the slumbering vales of France.
 Fleets the foeman's coast-line border'd,
 Closed and seal'd each harbour mouth.
 Swiftly was our regiment order'd
 To the trenches of the South.
 Frank and I (the boy had pleasure
 In a peril full of charm)
 Pass'd our last few days of leisure
 For a farewell at the farm.
 There I urged my suit yet stronger,
 Made her father understand :
 " We have but a scant time longer,
 Pledge the promise of her hand ;
 Living, I'll bestow upon her
 All the comfort wealth confers ;
 Or if death should come with honour,
 When I fall my fortune's hers."

So the farmer call'd his daughter ;
 Spoke to her as I desired ;
 Signified consentment ; taught her
 What obedience he required.

Meek as was her wont, she duly
 Listen'd, but her eyes were dim,
 For she loved her cousin truly,
 And my hatred rose at him.
 That sad face my slumber haunted
 Till my anger soar'd above
 All control. At length I taunted
 Lucy with her secret love.
 "Faithless to your promise given,
 Faithless to the vows you plight.
 You prefer him, but, by Heaven,
 I can well repay the slight;
 I am still his chief."

The cruel
 Coward words, of anger born,
 Fed the gathering flame with fuel,
 Turn'd dislike to hate and scorn.
 "You his chief!" Her form grew straighter,
 "Harm him! Go. I would not sue
 E'en though love of him were greater
 Than my great disdain of you."
 Thus she answer'd. Her confession
 Rankled, till we came to part;
 Jealous fury took possession
 Of my hot and vengeful heart.
 But to Frank she made no murmur,
 And he deem'd her pledged to me.
 Thus my love and hate grew firmer,
 Till the day we sail'd to sea.

Forth we sail'd. The Russian trenches
 Call'd us o'er the far sea-line.
 Rarely the blithe battle quenches
 Hearts of passion such as mine;
 And I cast about to slay him,
 Kild me of him once for all;
 Hoped the foeman might waylay him;
 Prayed the Fiend to send a ball
 That should smite him; rank'd him lowermost
 In my praise; found constant fault;
 Taunted him; yet placed him foremost
 In the desperate assault.
 Yet no bullet seem'd to reach him;
 Daringly he fought and well;
 And no tyranny could teach him
 To despair or to rebel.

'Twas a close and sullen morning
 In the heavy drouth of June,
 When the trumpet sounded warning
 And the cannon roll'd a tune
 Gladdening anxious ears. We started
 In the hope that cheer'd us on,
 Half an army eager-hearted,
 For the crested Mamelon,
 Joyous at the post assign'd us
 In the fiercest battle-brunt.
 Merrily boom'd the guns behind us,
 Merrily flash'd the fire in front;

Bullets whistled, iron shatter'd
 'Gainst the waving lines of red;
 On we press'd with columns scatter'd,
 Leaving landmarks of the dead,
 Till we gain'd the bayonet-gleaming
 Breastwork of the Muscovite,
 Carried it with colours streaming:
 Fierce and breathless grew the fight.
 But the Russian hordes outnumber'd
 Our poor troop. Our fame was short.
 Back we fell; the bodies cumber'd
 Every trench around the fort.
 Cannon from the city's distance
 Pour'd on us a deadly hail.
 "Who," I cried, "will seek assistance
 From the General, ere we fail?"
 Frank stepp'd forth.

"Ha, coward, dastard;
 You, I warrant, fain would go:
 'Tis light service!"

Rage o'ermaster'd
 All my sense to taunt him so.
 Hardly had I spoken, mocking,
 When a bullet struck my chest;
 And the foe swarm'd on us—locking
 Steel with steel, and breast to breast.
 I was down, but Frank bestrode me
 'Mid the onslaught's surge and break;
 And my failing eyesight show'd me
 How he battled for my sake,
 Till they wavered. Then he caught me
 In his arms; and as our spent
 Columns backward faltered, brought me
 Safe, though wounded, to my tent.

Through the weary months he nursed me,
 Wearing pain and watches dim;
 And my waking conscience curs'd me
 For my harsh misuse of him.
 Then I ask'd him: "Frank, my brother,
 Once it seem'd that you and I
 Had small cause to love each other:
 Wherefore leave me not to die?"
 Quietly he said, "What moves you
 Wonder out of that to make?
 I remember Lucy loves you,
 What I did was for her sake."

Long I ponder'd through the wearing
 Sickness. Truly he was great:
 His the more than hero-daring,
 For he conquer'd love and hate.

With the knowledge of his merit
 Time brought healing on its wing,
 Healing both to flesh and spirit;
 And, one early morn in Spring,
 Landed from the war, we hasten'd
 Homeward unto Lucy's door.
 Ah me! Time and pain had chasten'd
 Passion, but I loved her more

Than of old time. Yet was ample
 Space to act the nobler part,
 And I summon'd strength to trample
 On the embers of a heart;
 Ca'd her; one last time caress'd her;
 Greeted her my comrade's wife;
 Dower'd her with wealth, and bless'd her
 In their coming marriage life.

'Twas a fight that left me firmer
 Ere I sail'd beyond the sea.
 One day I may hear the murmur
 Of her children at my knee,
 As they beg with infant prattle
 Tales of wars that I have seen,
 Knowing not my hardest battle
 Once I fought for Lucy Deane.

A POOR MAN'S WIFE.

HER dainty hand nestled in mine, rich and white,
 And timid as trembling dove;
 And it twinkled about me, a jewel of light,
 As she garnisht our feast of love:
 'Twas the queenliest hand in all lady-land,
 And she was a poor Man's wife!
 O! little ye'd think how that wee, white hand
 Could dare in the battle of Life.

Her heart it was lowly as maiden's might be,
 But hath climb'd to heroic height,
 And burn'd like a shield in defence of me,
 On the sorest field of fight!
 And startling as fire, it hath often flasht up
 In her eyes, the good heart and rare!
 As she drank down her half of our bitterest cup,
 And taught me how to bear.

Her sweet eyes that seem'd, with their smile sublime,
 Made to look me and light me to heaven,
 They have triumph'd thro' bitter tears many a time,
 Since their love to my life was given:
 And the maiden-mek voice of the womanly Wife
 Still bringeth the heavens nigher;
 For it rings like the voice of God over my life,
 Aye bidding me climb up higher.

I hardly dared think it was human, when
 I first lookt in her yearning face;
 For it shone as the heavens had open'd then,
 And clad it with glory and grace!
 But dearer its light of healing grew
 In our dark and desolate day,
 As the Rainbow, when heaven hath no break of
 blue,
 Smileth the storm away.

O! her shape was the lithest Loveliness,—
 Just an armful of heaven to enfold!
 But the form that bends flower-like in love's caress,
 With the Victor's strength is soul'd!

In her worshipful presence transfigured I stand,
 And the poor Man's English home
 She lights with the Beauty of Greece the grand,
 And the glory of regallest Rome.

GERALD MASSEY.

ALFRED MYNN..

FOR A CRICKET CLUB.

JACKSON's pace is very fearful; Willsher's hand is
 very high;
 William Caffyn has good judgment, and an admir-
 able eye;
 Jemmy Grundy's cool and clever, almost always on
 the spot;
 Tinley's slows are often telling, though they
 sometimes catch it hot;
 But however good their trundling—pitch or pace,
 or break, or spin—
 Still the monarch of all bowlers, to my mind, was
 Alfred Mynn.

Richard Daft is cool and cautious, with his safe
 and graceful play;
 If George Griffith gets a loose one, he can send it
 far away.
 You may bowl your best at Hayward, and whatever
 style you try
 Will be vanquished by the master's steady hand
 and certain eye.
 But whatever fame and glory these and other bats
 may win,
 Still the monarch of hard hitters, to my mind, was
 Alfred Mynn.

You may praise the pluck of Burbidge, as he plays
 an up-hill match;
 You may thunder cheers to Miller for a wondrous
 running catch;
 You may join with me in wishing that the Oval,
 once again,
 Shall resound with hearty plaudits to the praise of
 Mr. Lane;
 But the Gentlemen of England the match will
 hardly win,
 Till they find another bowler such as glorious
 Alfred Mynn!

When the great old Kent Eleven, full of pluck
 and hope, began
 The grand battle with All England, single-handed,
 man to man,
 How the hop-men watched their hero, massive,
 muscular, and tall,
 As he mingled with the players, like a king amongst
 them all;
 'Till to some old Kent enthusiasts it would almost
 seem a sin
 To doubt their County's triumph when led on by
 Alfred Mynn.

Though Sir Frederick and "The Veteran" bowled straight, and sure, and well;
 Though Box behind the wicket only Lockyer can excel;
 Though Jemmy Dean as long-stop would but seldom grant a bye;
 Though no novices in batting were George Parr, and Joseph Guy,
 Said the fine old Kentish farmers, with a fine old Kentish grin,
 "Why there ain't a man among 'em as can match our Alfred Mynn!"

And whatever was the issue of the frank and friendly fray
 (Aye, and often has his bowling turned the fortune of the day),
 Still the Kentish men fought bravely, never losing hope nor heart,
 Every man of the Eleven glad and proud to play his part;
 And with five such mighty cricketers, 'twas but natural to win—
 As Felix, Wenman, Hillyer, Fuller Pilch, and Alfred Mynn!
 With his tall and stately presence, with his nobly moulded form,
 His broad hand—'twas ever open! his brave heart—'twas ever warm!—
 All were proud of him, all loved him! . . . As the changing seasons pass;
 As our Champion lies a-sleeping underneath the Kentish grass;
 Proudly, sad'y, we will name him—to forget him were a sin;
 Lightly lie the turf upon thee, kind and manly Alfred Mynn!

W. J. PROWSE.

MERELY PLAYERS.

A DUOLOGUE.

AN ACTRESS. A DOCTOR.

SCENE.—A poor lodging in the country. The doctor comes softly out of an inner room and closes the door. The actress is sitting on a small table smoking a cigarette.

ACTRESS. Oh! there you are, doctor. How is she to-day?

DOCTOR. Better, thanks to you.

ACTRESS. Oh, dear no! I've done nothing.

DOCTOR. You have nursed her until you are ill and worn out yourself. May I feel your pulse?

ACTRESS. No.

DOCTOR. You think you are all right?

ACTRESS. I know I am.

DOCTOR. May I stay and talk to you a little?

ACTRESS. If you like.

DOCTOR. You have been here a month.

ACTRESS. Yes, luckily for Lil, or she would have lost her engagement and her screw.

DOCTOR. And her nurse too.

ACTRESS. How do you know? I might have gone on with the company and left her.

DOCTOR. Might you?

ACTRESS. Don't think me a saint!

DOCTOR. I haven't yet put you in that light. I have only seen a very good woman.

ACTRESS. Stop! Talk of something else. Now, you would never think, would you, that I was playing last night—to look at me, I mean?

DOCTOR. Well. No.

ACTRESS. Make-up, sir. It's a splendid thing to make up our characters, too, in real life, so that you shan't detect us. Now you think I'm good?

DOCTOR. I think nothing of the kind.

ACTRESS [*disconcerted*]. Good gracious! Do you think I'm bad?

DOCTOR [*smiling*]. I have already told you that your devotion to your friend has won my most honest admiration.

ACTRESS. Oh! Well, that's put on. It pays. She will nurse me when I'm ill, won't she? [*Silence, and she flings away the cigarette.*] Doctor, don't believe in me.

DOCTOR. I can't help it.

ACTRESS. Why, I'm a mass of deceit. What colour would you call my hair?

DOCTOR. Golden—a golden brown.

ACTRESS. I knew it. My hair is really black, dyed, sir, as we dye our very natures, lest you should discover the colour of our sins.

DOCTOR. Black!

ACTRESS. Of course! Cleverly managed, that's all. It makes a vast difference to a face. Once when we were very poor—

DOCTOR. We? That is, yourself and your friend.

ACTRESS. No! I was married—I meant the child. It died.

DOCTOR. I was married too.

ACTRESS. Were you? Is she dead?

DOCTOR [*quietly*]. No! She ran away. She was very young and giddy, and I was grave and stern, and she tired of me. That is all.

ACTRESS. And you have hated women from that moment, of course.

DOCTOR. I lost my faith in them.

ACTRESS. Will it never return?

DOCTOR. It has returned.

ACTRESS. What nonsense! Don't let it! Yet we are, after all, much wiser men make us. I held my real nature hidden for two years at the pleasure of a man, and it broke free at last. I was treated like a child, just as I was struggling to be a woman, and my best impulses were laughed at, and kept down.

DOCTOR. And so you leave to-morrow?

ACTRESS. Yes.

DOCTOR. To continue to lead this life?

Than of old time. Yet was ample
 Space to act the nobler part,
 And I summon'd strength to trample
 On the embers of a heart;
 Cal'd her; one last time caress'd her;
 Greeted her my comrade's wife;
 Dower'd her with wealth, and bless'd her
 In their coming marriage life.

'Twas a fight that left me firmer
 Ere I sail'd beyond the sea.
 One day I may hear the murmur
 Of her children at my knee,
 As they beg with infant prattle
 Tales of wars that I have seen,
 Knowing not my hardest battle
 Once I fought for Lucy Deane.

' A POOR MAN'S WIFE.

HER dainty hand nestled in mine, rich and white,
 And timid as trembling dove;
 And it twinkled about me, a jewel of light,
 As she garnisht our feast of love:
 'Twas the queenliest hand in all lady-land,
 And she was a poor Man's wife!
 O! little ye'd think how that wee, white hand
 Could dare in the battle of Life.

HER heart it was lowly as maiden's might be,
 But hath climb'd to heroic height,
 And burn'd like a shield in defence of me,
 On the sorest field of fight!
 And startling as fire, it hath often flasht up
 In her eyes, the good heart and rare!
 As she drank down her half of our bitterest cup,
 And taught me how to bear.

Her sweet eyes that seem'd, with their smile sublime,
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 They have triumph'd thro' bitter tears many a time,
 Since their love to my life was given:
 And the maiden-meck voice of the womanly Wife
 Still bringeth the heavens nigher;
 For it rings like the voice of God over my life,
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 William Caiffyn has good judgment, and an admir-
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 Tinley's slows are often telling, though they
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 You may bowl your best at Hayward, and whatever
 style you try
 Will be vanquished by the master's steady hand
 and certain eye.
 But whatever fame and glory these and other bats
 may win,
 Still the monarch of hard hitters, to my mind, was
 Alfred Mynn.

You may praise the pluck of Burbidge, as he plays
 an up-hill match;
 You may thunder cheers to Miller for a wondrous
 running catch;
 You may join with me in wishing that the Oval,
 once again,
 Shall resound with hearty plaudits to the praise of
 Mr. Lane;
 But the Gentlemen of England the match will
 hardly win,
 Till they find another bowler such as glorious
 Alfred Mynn!

When the great old Kent Eleven, full of pluck
 and hope, began
 The grand battle with All England, single-handed,
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 How the hop-men watched their hero, massive,
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 As he mingled with the players, like a king amongst
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 'Till to some old Kent enthusiasts it would almost
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 To doubt their County's triumph when led on by
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 As our Champion lies a-sleeping underneath the Kentish grass;
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W. J. PROWSE.

MERELY PLAYERS.

A DUOLOGUE.

AN ACTRESS. A DOCTOR.

SCENE—A poor lodging in the country. The doctor comes softly out of an inner room and closes the door. The actress is sitting on a small table smoking a cigarette.

ACTRESS. Oh! there you are, doctor. How is she to-day?

DOCTOR. Better, thanks to you.

ACTRESS. Oh, dear no! I've done nothing.

DOCTOR. You have nursed her until you are ill and worn out yourself. May I feel your pulse?

ACTRESS. No.

DOCTOR. You think you are all right?

ACTRESS. I know I am.

DOCTOR. May I stay and talk to you a little?

ACTRESS. If you like.

DOCTOR. You have been here a month.

ACTRESS. Yes, luckily for Lil, or she would have lost her engagement and her screw.

DOCTOR. And her nurse too.

ACTRESS. How do you know? I might have gone on with the company and left her.

DOCTOR. Might you?

ACTRESS. Don't think me a saint!

DOCTOR. I haven't yet put you in that light. I have only seen a very good woman.

ACTRESS. Stop! Talk of something else. Now, you would never think, would you, that I was playing last night—to look at me, I mean?

DOCTOR. Well. No.

ACTRESS. Make-up, sir. It's a splendid thing to make up our characters, too, in real life, so that you shan't detect us. Now you think I'm good?

DOCTOR. I think nothing of the kind.

ACTRESS [*disconcerted*]. Good gracious! Do you think I'm bad?

DOCTOR [*smiling*]. I have already told you that your devotion to your friend has won my most honest admiration.

ACTRESS. Oh! Well, that's put on. It pays. She will nurse me when I'm ill, won't she? [*Silence, and she flings away the cigarette.*] Doctor, don't believe in me.

DOCTOR. I can't help it.

ACTRESS. Why, I'm a mass of deceit. What colour would you call my hair?

DOCTOR. Golden—a golden brown.

ACTRESS. I knew it. My hair is really black, dyed, sir, as we dye our very natures, lest you should discover the colour of our sins.

DOCTOR. Black!

ACTRESS. Of course! Cleverly managed, that's all. It makes a vast difference to a face. Once when we were very poor—

DOCTOR. We? That is, yourself and your friend.

ACTRESS. No! I was married—I meant the child. It died.

DOCTOR. I was married too.

ACTRESS. Were you? Is she dead?

DOCTOR [*quietly*]. No! She ran away. She was very young and giddy, and I was grave and stern, and she tired of me. That is all.

ACTRESS. And you have hated women from that moment, of course.

DOCTOR. I lost my faith in them.

ACTRESS. Will it never return?

DOCTOR. It has returned.

ACTRESS. What nonsense! Don't let it! Yet we are, after all, much what men make us. I held my real nature hidden for two years at the pleasure of a man, and it broke free at last. I was treated like a child, just as I was struggling to be a woman, and my best impulses were laughed at, and kept down.

DOCTOR. And so you leave to-morrow?

ACTRESS. Yes.

DOCTOR. To continue to lead this life?

ACTRESS. Why not? It is no less true for seeming false. I remember, when my baby died, I had to play all the same, and in the piece I had to cry, and did. And a woman I knew in the audience told me I was a fool to put glycerine on my lashes to look like tears, because it ruined my make-up. That's life! Give men and women the real article and they think they see through it, and doubt its truth. Give them paste and paint, and they like it, and believe it true, and know better than the owner of it. People will persist in being too clever; but, after all, they only cheat themselves.

DOCTOR [smiling]. You are quite a philosopher.

ACTRESS. I am a woman who has suffered—perhaps that's the same thing.

DOCTOR. You were not educated for the stage?

ACTRESS [bitterly]. No; I was educated for a man.

DOCTOR. You mean—

ACTRESS. I mean I was very young when I married, and he was clever, and wished to mould me after his own pattern. I chose to pretend this was impossible; but my nature grew all the same. Let a man beware when he crushes ambition and interest in a woman, it will live in spite of him, and come to the surface some time. Now your wife—

DOCTOR. Was young and foolish—never sinful—that is all.

ACTRESS. And you were never selfish enough to wish her sole pride to be in you, her sole interest in your interests, her sole knowledge, the knowledge you instilled into her giddy brain?

DOCTOR. I hope not.

ACTRESS. You were never jealous of her mind, as you were jealous of her favour, of her love for art or literature—a blind love, for she knew little of either—because you could not spare time to instruct her in either.

DOCTOR. Again—I hope not.

ACTRESS. Then you were. We never hope about a certainty.

DOCTOR. If she had been a woman—well, like you—all might have been different.

ACTRESS. Nonsense! You have seen one side of my character, that is all. Men are so quick to imagine the surface turned towards them is the only one we women own.

DOCTOR. I saw you tending your sick friend. I saw your patience and love for her. I see you slaving at your profession with no one to help and encourage you, leading a life that must often be uncongenial. I want to know little more of you than that.

ACTRESS. False! False! Everything's false. There is nothing real about me. Now, my age?

DOCTOR [smiling]. You are not very old.

ACTRESS. My back is to the light. Put out your hand and touch my cheek. Why, how your hand trembles! Covered with white stuff, of course. Wrinkles all hidden. I told you about my hair.

DOCTOR. I don't care. I—I like the woman I know. The woman you have been since I first met you—when they carried your friend home ill from the theatre, and then sent for me. If you are false, I am afraid I love falseness. I am foolish enough to have got to the stage when even defamation of yourself from your own lips could not harm you. Yet I am glad, after all, that you are going; for, as I told you, I have a wife somewhere, and even to love you, as I love you, is a sin.

ACTRESS [slowly descending from table and going towards him]. You love me.

DOCTOR. As I never knew one could love. I even love this poor, pretty, tortured hair; and these dear tired eyes. I love you painted, or old, laughing or in tears. I seem to have crept out of the cold and found your heart, as it really is. Don't try and hide it from me. The glimpses I have had of it have been paradise.

ACTRESS. Her hair—your wife's hair—was black.

DOCTOR. Who told you that?

ACTRESS. The way you looked when I said what mine had been. Try and imagine me with black hair.

DOCTOR. I can't.

ACTRESS. And so you love this actress?

DOCTOR. And would marry her if—

ACTRESS. If she were your wife.

DOCTOR [staring]. What do you mean?

ACTRESS. Look at me well. [There is silence; after some time she timidly lays her hand on his arm]. Our little baby died, dear.

[He puts both his arms round her, and they stand looking down at the fire together.]

CURTAIN.

CLARA SAVILE CLARKE.

THE FATAL TRYST.

WHERE the restless ocean ever
Smote in thunder on the shore,
With reverberating echoes
From the great cliffs evermore;
Where the long grey reach of sand hill
Fronted to the angry sea,
And the bitter spray swept landward
O'er the corn-land and the lea;
There her fathers built their dwelling,
Raised the ancient turrets high,
For a landmark 'mid the woodland,
Looking out to sea and sky.
There she dwelt in maiden splendour,
Last of all her ancient race,
With their old ancestral beauty
And the proud Tressilian face.

Never was a mortal maiden
 Cast of such imperial mould,
 Worthy of the porphyry chamber
 In Byzantine days of old.
 All the tones of northern midnights
 In the dark wreaths of her hair,
 While the white breast of the sea-gull
 Than her throat was not more fair.
 All the wind's æolian music,
 As she heard it year by year,
 Had given magic to her singing,
 And her voice was angel clear.
 Little wonder that I worshipped
 As one worships at a shrine,
 For so lowly was my passion
 That I scarce dared dream her mine.

Years roll'd on, and love grown bolder,
 Dared to hope for fair reply;
 Happy meetings gave me courage,
 Partings 'neath the moonlit sky.
 Though we rival'd their broad acres,
 Lords of many a league of land,
 Truest worship aye is humble,
 And I scarce dared ask her hand.
 Yet our lineage was as noble
 As the proud Tressilian line;
 So, at last, I vow'd to ask her
 Would she yield to love like mine?

And we made a tryst together
 For a meeting and I went—
 Far the sunset flags were flaming,
 And the day was well-nigh spent,
 There upon the tall cliff's summit,
 We had chosen place of tryst—
 Where the rocks stand out with lichens
 Silver'd by the morning mist.
 On I strode, when lo! before me
 There my brother stood, and she
 Lean'd towards him as the great rock
 Bends upon the heaving sea.

Clearly did the wind of evening
 Waft their lightest words, and I
 Grew as stern at heart and wrathful
 As the storm-cloud of the sky.
 Was it for this condemnation
 I had worshipp'd where she trod
 And had named her at the altar
 "Twixt my orisons and God?
 Lo! I thought she plays the leman,
 And would fain deceive us both;
 Though, in sooth, I ne'er had asked her
 Boldly for her plighted troth.
 But my glance had rested on her,
 And her eyes had answer'd mine,
 As the silver of the chalice
 Flashes back the waves of wine.

So at last I strode before them,
 As he bent above her hand,
 And a darker shadow gather'd
 From the cloud-rack o'er the land.
 Swift before me,—back they started,
 And in mocking words I said,
 "May I offer congratulations,
 Presence of the day you wed,
 Fitting is it as a brother
 I should witness your troth-plight,
 Though a fatal shadow gathers
 On my lonely path to night?"
 Not a single word in answer—
 But a look of saddest pain
 On their brows as there they faced me,
 And I madly spoke again:—

"Look you, brother, 'ere these nuptials,
 I must urge a dearer claim;
 Here shall Miss Tressilian answer,
 'Ere she bears a traitor's name.
 I, too, as you wot, have loved her,
 And your ears have often heard
 Frank confession of my passion,
 Drinking in each foolish word.
 So now, though no troth we plighted,
 Though I loved and made no sign,
 Here, I swear, shall Edith answer,
 Are her proud lips yours or mine?"

Dark his brow grew at my speaking,
 Darker with the waning light;
 And he answer'd words of scorn:—
 "What, if I deny your right
 Thus to question? Love is blindfold,
 We are equal in degree;
 I shall ask no blessing from you
 If the prize belongs to me!"

Then she started—would have spoken—
 Through the tears that dimm'd her face:
 But in tumult of our passions
 We had strode on each a space,
 And, ere any intervention,
 Closed in fratricidal fray,
 Burnt upon my brain, remembrance
 Keeps the record of that day.
 One short struggle—then a death-scream,
 And I hurl'd him to a grave,
 Where a thousand feet beneath us,
 Black the basalt broke the wave!

There was silence, weird and awful
 As the stillness of the tomb,
 Only some stray sea-gull's laughter
 Rang above us in the gloom.
 Then I turn'd and looked on Edith,
 As she cower'd upon the sod.
 Was she calling for swift vengeance
 From the outraged heart of God?

Turn'd she soon, and with the accents
Of a prophetess of doom,
Spoke, while pale I stood before her
In the twilight's gathered gloom.
"Would to Heaven the last Tressilian
Had been borne the road alone,
To the old vault where my father's
Rest beneath the carven stone,
Ere man's wild insensate passion
Had so stained the name I bear,
That a murderer weaves the chaplet
For my maiden brows to wear,
Since a brother's blood in madness
Spilt between us rolls for aye,
Since the brand of Cain is on thee
Ineffaceable this day!
Hear me swear before I leave thee
To remorseful days and nights,
That your brother, dead beneath us,
Was no stealer of your rights.
I had scorned him when he pleaded,
Hoping fairer fate was mine.
For your endless desolation,
Hear me swear my heart was thine!"

So she ended, and passed from me
To the old home of her race.
Not one look of love or pity
On the marble of her face.
As the nightfall hid her presence,
So the night came o'er my life,
And I fled to lose remembrance
Of that awful hour of strife,
Vainly, for where'er I wander
There that fearsome scene must be,
And a pale face comes to haunt me—
Saddest secret of the sea.
I have drained the cup of terror
Deeply to the dregs, I ween,
Losing in an hour of madness
Such a love as hers had been.
While I cling for absolution
Humbly to the cross of Christ,
Day and night my soul is ever
Haunted by that Fatal Tryst.

THE RHYME OF SIR LAUNCELOT BOGLE.

A LEGEND OF GLASGOW.

THERE'S a pleasant place of rest, near a City of the
West,
Where its bravest and its best find their grave.
Below the willows weep, and their hoary branches
steep
In the waters still and deep,
Not a wave!

And the old cathedral wall, so scathed and grey
and tall,
Like a priest surveying all, stands beyond;
And the ringing of its bell, when the ringers ring
it well,
Makes a kind of tidal swell

On the pond!

And there it was I lay, on a beauteous summer's
day,
With the odour of the hay floating by;
And I heard the blackbirds sing, and the bells
demurely ring,
Chime by chime, ting by ting,
Droppingly.

Then my thoughts went wandering back, on a very
beaten track,
To the confine deep and black of the tomb;
And I wondered who he was, that is laid beneath
the grass,
Where the dandelion has

Such a bloom.

Then I straightway did espy, with my slantly-
sloping eye,
A carved stone hard by, somewhat worn;
And I read in letters cold—*Here lies Launcelot .*
ye . boldr,
O . ff . ye . rae . off . Bogle . ely,
Glasgow . hornr.

He . wals . ane . balgaunt . knyghte . maist . terrible .
in . fyghte .

Here the letters failed outright, but I knew
That a stout crusading lord, who had crossed the
Jordan's ford,

Lay there beneath the sward,

Wet with dew.

Time and tide they passed away, on that pleasant
summer's day,

And around me, as I lay, all grew old:
Sank the chimneys from the town, and the cloud
of vapour brown

No longer, like a crown,

O'er it rolled.

Sank the great Saint Rollox stalk, like a pile of
dingy chalk;

Disappeared the cypress walk, and the flowers;
And a donjon-keep arose, that might baffle any
foes,

With its men-at-arms in rows,

On the towers.

And the flag that flaunted there showed the grim
and grizzly bear,

Which the Boggles always wear for their crest.
And I heard the warder call, as he stood upon the
wall,

"Wake ye up! my comrades all,

From your rest!

"For, by the blessed rood, there's a glimpse of
armour good

In the deep Cowcaddons wood, o'er the stream ;
And I hear the stifled hum of a multitude that
come,
Though they have not beat the drum,
It would seem !

"Go tell it to my lord, lest he wish to man the
ford

With partisan and sword, just beneath :
Ho, Gilkison and Nares ! Ho, Provan of Cowlairs !
We'll back the bonny bears
To the death !"

To the tower above the moat, like one who heedeth
not,
Came the bold Sir Launcelet, half undressed ;
On the outer rim he stood, and peered into the
wood,
With his arms across him glued
On his breast.

And he muttered, "Foe accurst ! hast thou dared
to seek me first ?

George of Gorbals, do thy worst—for I swear,
O'er thy gory corpse to ride, ere thy sister and my
bride,
From my undiscovered side
Thou shalt tear !

"Ho, herald mine, Brownlee ! ride forth, I pray,
and see,

Who, what, and whence is he, foe or friend !
Sir Roderick Dalglish, and my foster-brother
Neish,
With his bloodhounds in the leash,
Shall attend."

Forth went the herald stout, o'er the drawbridge
and without,

Then a wild and savage shout rose again,
Six arrows sped their force, and, a pale and bleed-
ing corse,
He sank from off his horse
On the plain !

Back drew the bold Dalglish, back started stalwart
Neish,

With his bloodhounds in the leash, from Brown-
lee.

"Now shame be to the sword that made thee knight
and lord,
Thou caitiff thrice abhorred,
Shame on thee !

"Ho, bowmen, bend your bows ! Discharge upon
the foes

Forthwith no end of those heavy bolts.
Three angels to the brave who finds the foe a
grave,
And a gallows for the slave
Who revolts !"

Ten days the combat lasted ; but the bold defenders
fasted ;

While the foemen, better pastied, fed their host ;
You might hear the savage cheers of the hungry
Gorbaliens,
As at night they dressed the steers
For the roast.

And Sir Launcelet grew thin, and Provan's double
chin

Showed sundry folds of skin down beneath ;
In silence and in grief found Gilkison relief,
Nor did Neish the spell-word, beef,
Dare to breathe.

To the ramparts Edith came, that fair and youth-
ful dame,

With the rosy evening flame on her face.
She sighed, and looked around on the soldiers on
the ground,
Who but little penance found,
Saying grace !

And she said unto her lord, as he leaned upon his
sword,

"One short and little word may I speak ?
I cannot bear to view those eyes so ghastly blue,
Or mark the sallow hue
Of thy cheek !

"I know the rage and wrath that my furious
brother hath

Is less against us both than at me.
Then, dearest, let me go, to find among the foe
An arrow from the bow,
Like Brownlee !"

"I would soil my father's name, I would lose my
treasured fame,

Ladye mine, should such a shame on me light :
While I wear a belted brand, together still we
stand,
Heart to heart, hand in hand !"
Said the knight.

"All our chances are not lost, as your brother and
his host

Shall discover to their cost rather hard !
Ho, Provan ! Take this key—hoist up the Mal-
voisie,
And heap it, d'ye see,
In the yard.

"Of usquebaugh and rum, you will find, I reckon,
some,

Besides the beer and mum, extra stout ;
Go straightway to your tasks, and roll me all the
casks,
As also range the flasks,
Just without.

"If I know the Gorbaliens, they are sure to dip
their ears

In the very inmost tiers of the drink.
Let them win the outer court, and hold it for their
sport,
Since their time is rather short,
I should think!"

With a loud triumphant yell, as the heavy draw-
bridge fell,

Rushed the Gorbaliens pell-mell, wild as Druids;
Mad with thirst for human gore, how they
threatened and they swore,
Till they stumbled on the floor,
O'er the fluids.

Down their weapons then they threw, and each
savage soldier drew

From his belt an iron screw, in his fist;
George of Gorbals found it vain their excitement
to restrain,
And indeed was rather fain
To assist.

With a beaker in his hand, in the midst he took
his stand,

And silence did command, all below—
"Ho! Launcelot the bold, ere thy lips are icy cold,
In the centre of thy hold,
Pledge me now!

"Art surly, brother mine? In this cup of rosy
wine,

I drink to the decline of thy race!
Thy proud career is done, thy sand is nearly run,
Never more shall setting sun
Gild thy face!

"The pilgrim, in amaze, shall see a goodly blaze,
Ere the pallid morning rays flicker up;

And perchance he may spy certain corpses swing-
ing high!
What, brother! art thou dry?
Fill my cup!"

Dumb as death stood Launcelot, as though he
heard him not,

But his bosom Provan smote, and he swore:
And Sir Roderick Dalgleish remarked aside to
Neish,

"Never sure did thirsty fish
Swallow more!

"Thirty casks are nearly done, yet the revel's
scarce begun;

It were knightly sport and fun to strike in!"
"Nay, tarry till they come," quoth Neish, "unto
the rum—
They are working at the mum,
And the gin!"

Then straight there did appear to each gallant
Gorbaliens

Twenty castles dancing near, all around;
The solid earth did shake, and the stones beneath
them quake,
And sinuous as a snake

Moved the ground.

Why and wherefore they had come, seemed intri-
cate to some,

But all agreed the rum was divine.
And they looked with bitter scorn on their leader
highly born,
Who preferred to fill his horn
Up with wine!

Then said Launcelot the tall, "Bring the chargers
from their stall;

Lead them straight unto the hall, down below:
Draw your weapons from your side, fling the gates
asunder wide,
And together we shall ride
On the foe!"

Then Provan knew full well, as he leaped into his
selle,

That how would 'scape to tell how they fared;
And Gilkison and Nares, both mounted on their
mares,
Looked terrible as bears,
All prepared.

With his bloodhounds in the leash, stood the iron-
sinewed Neish,

And the falchion of Dalgleish glittered bright—
"Now, wake the trumpet's blast; and, comrades,
follow fast;
Smite them down unto the last!"
Cried the knight.

In the cumbered yard without, there was shriek,
and yell, and shout,

As the warriors wheeled about, all in mail.
On the miserable kerne fell the death-strokes stiff
and stern,
As the deer treads down the fern,
In the vale.

Saint Mungo be my guide! It was goodly in that
tide

To see the Bogle ride in his haste;
He accompanied each blow with a cry of "Ha!"
or "Ho!"
And always cleft the foe

To the waist.

"George of Gorbals—craven lord! thou didst
threat me with the cord;

Come forth and brave my sword, if you dare!"
But he met with no reply, and never could descry
The glitter of his eye

Anywhere.

Ere the dawn of morning shone, all the Gorbaliars
were down,

Like a field of barley mown in the ear:
It had done a soldier good to see how Provan
stood,

With Neish all bathed in blood,
Panting near.

"Now ply ye to your tasks—go carry down those
casks,

And place the empty flasks upon the floor;
George of Gorbals scarce will come, with trumpet
and with drum,

To taste our beer and rum
Any more!"

So they plied them to their tasks, and they carried
down the casks,

And replaced the empty flasks on the floor:
But pallid for a week was the cellar-master's
cheek,

For he swore he heard a shriek
Through the door.

When the merry Christmas came, and the Yule-log
lent its flame

To the face of squire and dame in the hall,
The cellarer went down to tap October brown,
Which was rather of renown

Amongst them all.

He placed the spigot low, and gave the cask a blow,
But his liquor would not flow through the pin.

"Sure, 'tis sweet as honeysuckles!" so he rapped
it with his knuckles,

But a sound, as if of buckles,
Clashed within.

"Bring a hatchet, varlets, here!" and they cleft
the cask of beer:

What a spectacle of fear met their sight!
There George of Gorbals lay, skull and bones all
blanched and grey,

In the arms he bore the day
Of the fight!

I have sung this ancient tale, not, I trust, without
avail,

Though the moral ye may fail to perceive;
Sir Launcelot is dust, and his gallant sword is
rust,

And now, I think I must
Take my leave!

From "The Bon Gaultier Ballads."

THE OBITUARY POET.

A RATHER unusual sensation has been excited in
the village by the *Morning Argus* within a day or
two; and while most of the readers of that wonder-

ful sheet have thus been supplied with amusement,
the soul of the editor has been filled with gloom
and wrath and despair. Colonel Bangs recently
determined to engage an assistant to take the place
made vacant by the retirement of the eminent art-
critic, Mr. Murphy, and he found in one of the
lower counties of the State a person who appeared
to him to be suitable. The name of the new man
is Slimmer. He has often contributed to the
Argus verses of a distressing character, and I sup-
pose Bangs must have become acquainted with him
through the medium of the correspondence thus
begun. No one in the world but Bangs would
ever have selected such a poet for an editorial
position. But Bangs is singular—he is exceptional.
He never operates in accordance with any known
laws, and he is more than likely to do any given
thing in such a fashion as no other person could
possibly have adopted for the purpose. As the
Argus is also *sui generis*, perhaps Bangs does right
to conduct it in a peculiar manner. But he made
a mistake when he employed Mr. Slimmer.

The colonel, in his own small way, is tolerably
shrewd. He had observed the disposition of per-
sons who have been bereaved of their relatives to
give expression to their feelings in verse, and it
occurred to him that it might be profitable to use
Slimmer's poetical talent in such a way as to make
the *Argus* a very popular vehicle for the convey-
ance to the public of notices of deaths. That
kind of intelligence, he well knew, is especially
interesting to a very large class of readers, and he
believed that if he could offer to each advertiser a
gratuitous verse to accompany the obituary para-
graph, the *Argus* would not only attract advertise-
ments of that description from the country round
about the village, but it would secure a much
larger circulation.

When Mr. Slimmer arrived, therefore, and en-
tered upon the performance of his duties, Colonel
Bangs explained his theory to the poet, and sug-
gested that whenever a death-notice reached the
office, he should immediately write a rhyme or two
which should express the sentiments most suitable
to the occasion.

"You understand, Mr. Slimmer," said the colonel,
"that when the death of an individual is announced
I want you, as it were, to cheer the members of
the afflicted family with the resources of your
noble art. I wish you to throw yourself, you may
say, into their situation, and to give them, for
instance, a few lines about the deceased which will
seem to be the expression of the emotion which
agitates the breasts of the bereaved."

"To lighten the gloom in a certain sense," said
Mr. Slimmer, "and to—"

"Precisely," exclaimed Colonel Bangs. "Lighten
the gloom. Do not mourn over the departed, but
rather take a joyous view of death, which, after all,
Mr. Slimmer, is, as it were, but the entrance to a
better life. Therefore, I wish you to touch the

heart-strings of the afflicted with a tender hand, and to endeavour, for instance, to divert their minds from contemplation of the horrors of the tomb."

"Refrain from despondency, I suppose, and lift their thoughts to——"

"Just so! And at the same time combine elevating sentiment with such practical information as you can obtain from the advertisement. Throw a glamour of poesy, for instance, over the commonplace details of the every-day life of the deceased. People are fond of minute descriptions. Some facts useful for this purpose may be obtained from the man who brings the notice to the office; others you may perhaps be able to supply from your imagination."

"I think I can do it first rate," said Mr. Slimmer.

"But, above all," continued the colonel, "try always to take a bright view of the matter. Cause the sunshine of smiles, as it were, to burst through the tempest of tears; and if we don't make the *Morning Argus* hum around this town, it will be queer."

Mr. Slimmer had charge of the editorial department the next day during the absence of Colonel Bangs in Wilmington. Throughout the afternoon and evening death-notices arrived; and when one would reach Mr. Slimmer's desk, he would lock the door, place the fingers of his left hand among his hair and agonise until he succeeded in completing a verse that seemed to him to accord with his instructions.

The next morning Mr. Slimmer proceeded calmly to the office for the purpose of embalming in sympathetic verse the memories of other departed ones. As he came near to the establishment he observed a crowd of people in front of it, struggling to get into the door. Ascending some steps upon the other side of the street, he overlooked the crowd, and could see within the office the clerks selling papers as fast as they could handle them, while the mob pushed and yelled in frantic efforts to obtain copies, the presses in the cellar meanwhile clanging furiously. Standing upon the curbstone in front of the office there was a long row of men, each of whom was engaged in reading the *Morning Argus* with an earnestness that Mr. Slimmer had never before seen displayed by the patrons of that sheet. The bard concluded that either his poetry had touched a sympathetic chord in the popular heart, or that an appalling disaster had occurred in some quarter of the globe.

He went around to the back of the office and ascended to the editorial rooms. As he approached the sanctum, loud voices were heard within. Mr. Slimmer determined to ascertain the cause before entering. He obtained a chair, and placing it by the side door, he mounted and peeped over the door through the transom. There sat Colonel Bangs, holding the *Morning Argus* in both hands, while the fringe which grew in a semicircle around

the edge of his bald head stood straight out, until he seemed to resemble a gigantic gun-swab. Two or three persons stood in front of him in threatening attitudes. Slimmer heard one of them say:

"My name is McGlue sir!—William McGlue! I am a brother of the late Alexander McGlue. I picked up your paper this morning, and perceived in it an outrageous insult to my deceased relative, and I have come around to demand, sir, WHAT YOU MEAN by the following infamous language:

"The death-angel smote Alexander McGlue
And gave him protracted repose;
He wore a checked shirt and a Number Nine shoe
And he had a pink wart on his nose.
No doubt he is happier dwelling in space
Over there on the evergreen shore.
His friends are informed that his funeral takes place
Precisely at quarter-past four."

"This is simply diabolical! My late brother had no wart on his nose, sir. He had upon his nose neither a pink wart nor a green wart, nor a cream-coloured wart, nor a wart of any other colour. It is a slander! It is a gratuitous insult to my family, and I distinctly want you to say what do you mean by such conduct?"

"Really, sir," said Bangs, "it is a mistake. This is the horrible work of a miscreant in whom I reposed perfect confidence. He shall be punished by my own hand for this outrage. A pink wart! Awful! sir—awful! The miserable scoundrel shall suffer for this—he shall, indeed!"

"How could I know," murmured Mr. Slimmer to the foreman, who with him was listening, "that the corpse hadn't a pink wart? I used to know a man named McGlue, and he had one, and I thought all the McGlues had. This comes of irregularities in families."

"And who," said another man, addressing the editor, "authorised you to print this hideous stuff about my deceased son? Do you mean to say, Bangs, that it was not with your authority that your low comedian inserted with my advertisement the following scandalous burlesque? Listen to this:

"Willie had a purple monkey climbing on a yellow stick,
And when he sucked the paint all off it made him deathly sick;
And in his latest hours he clasped that monkey in his hand,
And bade good-bye to earth and went into a better land.
"Oh! no more he'll shoot his sister with his little wooden gun;
And no more he'll twist the pussy's tail and make her yowl for fun.
The pussy's tail now stands out straight; the gun is laid aside;
The monkey doesn't jump around since little Willie died."

"The atrocious character of this libel will appear when I say that my son was twenty years old, and that he died of liver complaint."

"Infamous!—utterly infamous!" groaned the editor as he cast his eyes over the lines. "And the wretch who did this still remains unpunished! It is too much!"

"And yet," whispered Slimmer to the foreman, "he told me to lighten the gloom and to cheer the afflicted family with the resources of my art; and I certainly thought that idea about the monkey would have that effect, somehow. Bangs is ungrateful!"

Just then there was a knock at the door, and a woman entered, crying.

"Are you the editor?" she inquired of Colonel Bangs.

Bangs said he was.

"W-w-well!" she said, in a voice broken by sobs, "wh-what d'you mean by publishing this kind of poetry about m-my child? M-my name is Sin-Smith; and wh-when I looked this m-morning for the notice of Johnny's d-death in your paper, I saw this scandalous verse:

"Four doctors tackled Johnny Smith—
They blistered and they bled him;
With squills and antibilious pills
And ipecac. they fed him.
They stirred him up with calomel,
And tried to move his liver;
But all in vain—his little soul
Was wafted o'er the River."

"It's false! false! and mean! Johnny only had one doctor. And they d-didn't b-bleed him and b-blisten him. It's a wicked falsehood, and you're a hard-hearted brute f-f-for printing it!"

"Madam, I shall go crazy!" exclaimed Bangs. "This is not my work. It is the work of a villain whom I will slay with my own hand as soon as he comes in. Madam, the miserable outcast shall die!"

"Strange! strange!" said Slimmer. "And this man told me to combine elevating sentiment with practical information. If the information concerning the squills and ipecac. is not practical, I have misunderstood the use of that word. And if young Smith didn't have four doctors, it was an outrage. He ought to have had them, and they ought to have excited his liver. Thus it is that human life is sacrificed to carelessness."

At this juncture the sheriff entered, his brow clothed with thunder. He had a copy of the *Morning Argus* in his hand. He approached the editor, and pointing to a death-notice, said:

"Read that outrageous burlesque, and tell me the name of the writer, so that I can chastise him."

The editor read as follows:

"We have lost our little Hanner in a very painful manner,
And we often asked, How can her harsh sufferings be borne?
When her death was first reported, her aunt got up and snorted
With the grief that she supported, for it made her feel forlorn."

"She was such a little seraph that her father, who is sheriff,
Really doesn't seem to care if he ne'er smiles in life again."

She has gone, we hope, to heaven, at the early age of seven (funeral starts off at eleven), where she'll never more have pain."

"As a consequence of this, I withdraw all the county advertising from your paper. A man who could trifle in this manner with the feelings of a parent is a savage and a scoundrel!"

As the sheriff went out, Colonel Bangs placed his head upon the table and groaned.

"Really," Mr. Slimmer said, "that person must be deranged. I tried, in his case, to put myself in his place, and to write as if I was one of the family, according to instructions. The verses are beautiful. That allusion to the grief of the aunt, particularly, seemed to me to be very happy. It expresses violent emotion with a felicitous combination of sweetness and force. These people have no soul—no appreciation of the beautiful in art."

While the poet mused, hurried steps were heard upon the stairs, and in a moment a middle-aged man dashed in abruptly, and seizing the colonel's scattered hair, bumped his prostrate head against the table three or four times with considerable force. Having expended the violence of his emotion in this manner, he held the editor's head down with one hand, shaking it occasionally by way of emphasis, and with the other hand seized the paper and said:

"You disgraceful old reprobate! You disgusting vampire! You hoary-headed old ghoul! What d'you mean by putting such stuff as this in your paper about my deceased son? What d'you mean by printing such awful doggerel as this, you depraved and dissolute ink-slinger—you imbecile quill-driver, you?"

"Oh! bury Bartholomew out in the woods,

In a beautiful hole in the ground,
Where the bumble-bees buzz and the woodpeckers sing,
And the straddle-bugs tumble around;
So that, in winter, when the snow and the slush
Have covered his last little bed,
His brother Artemas can go out with Jane
And visit the place with his sled."

"I'll teach you to talk about straddle-bugs! I'll instruct you about slush! I'll enlighten your insane old intellect on the subject of singing woodpeckers! What do you know about Jane and Artemas, you wretched buccaneer, you despicable butcher of the English language? Go out with a sled! I'll carry you out in a hearse before I'm done with you, you deplorable lunatic!"

At the end of every phrase the visitor gave the editor's head a fresh knock against the table. When the exercise was ended, Colonel Bangs explained and apologised in the humblest manner, promising at the same time to give his assailant a chance to flog Mr. Slimmer, who was expected to arrive in a few moments.

"The treachery of this man," murmured the poet to the foreman, "is dreadful. Didn't he desire me to throw a glamour of poetry over commonplace details? But for that I should never have thought of alluding to woodpeckers and bugs, and other children of Nature. The man objects to the remarks about the sled. Can the idiot know that it was necessary to have a rhyme for 'bed'? Can he suppose that I could write poetry without rhymes? The man is a lunatic. He ought not to be at large!"

Hardly had the indignant and energetic parent of Bartholomew departed when a man with red hair and a ferocious glare in his eyes entered, carrying a club and accompanied by a savage-looking dog.

"I want to see the editor," he shouted.

A ghastly pallor overspread the colonel's face, and he said:

"The editor is not in."

"Well, when *will* he be in, then?"

"Not for a week—for a month—for a year—for ever! He will never come in any more!" screamed Bangs. "He has gone to South America, with the intention to remain there during the rest of his life. He has departed. He has fled. If you want to see him, you had better follow him to the equator. He will be glad to see you. I would advise you, as a friend, to take the next boat—to start at once."

"That is unfortunate," said the man; "I came all the way from Delaware City for the purpose of battering him up a lot with this club."

"He will be sorry," said Bangs, sarcastically.

"He will regret missing you. I will write to him, and mention that you dropped in."

"My name is McFadden," said the man. "I came to break the head of the man who wrote that obituary poetry about my wife. If you don't tell me who perpetrated the following, I'll break *yours* for you. Where's the man who wrote this? I pay attention:

"Mrs. McFadden has gone from this life,
She has left all its sorrows and cares;
She caught the rheumatics in both of her legs
While scrubbing the cellar and stairs.
They put mustard-plasters upon her in vain;
They bathed her with whisky and rum;
But Thursday her spirit departed, and left
Her body entirely numb."

"The man who held the late Mrs. McFadden up to the scorn of an unsympathetic world in that shocking manner," said the editor, "is named James B. Slimmer. He boards in Blank Street, fourth door from the corner. I would advise you to call on him and avenge Mrs. McFadden's wrongs with an intermixture of club and dog-bites."

"And this," sighed the poet, outside the door, "is the man who told me to divert McFadden's mind from contemplation of the horrors of the tomb. It was this monster who counselled me to

make the sunshine of McFadden's smiles burst through the tempest of McFadden's tears. If that red-headed monster couldn't smile over that allusion to whisky and rum, if those remarks about the rheumatism in her legs could not divert his mind from the horrors of the tomb, was it *my* fault? McFadden grovels! He knows no more about poetry than a mule knows about the Shorter Catechism."

The poet determined to leave before any more criticisms were made upon his performances. He jumped down from his chair and crept softly toward the back staircase.

The story told by the foreman relates that Colonel Bangs at the same instant resolved to escape any further persecution, and he moved off in the direction taken by the poet. The two met upon the landing, and the colonel was about to begin his quarrel with Slimmer, when an enraged old woman who had been groping her way upstairs suddenly plunged her umbrella at Bangs, and held him in the corner while she handed a copy of the *Argus* to Slimmer, and pointing to a certain stanza, asked him to read it aloud. He did so in a somewhat tremulous voice and with frightened glances at the enraged colonel. The verse was as follows:

"Little Alexander's dead;
Jam him in a coffin;
Don't have as good a chance
For a funeral often.
Rush his body right around
To the cemetery;
Drop him in the sepulchre
With his Uncle Jerry."

The colonel's assailant accompanied the recitation with such energetic remarks as these:

"Oh, you willin! D'you hear that, you wretch? What d'you mean by writin' of my grandson in that way? Take that, you serpint! Oh, you wiper, you! tryin' to break a lone widdler's heart with such scand'lus lies as them! There, you willin! I kemmere to hammer you well with this here umbrella, you owdacious wiper, you! Take that, and that, you wile, indecent, disgustin' wagabone! When you know well enough that Aleck never had no Uncle Jerry, and never had no uncle in no sepulchre anyhow, you wile wretch, you!"

When Mr. Slimmer had concluded his portion of the entertainment, he left the colonel in the hands of the enemy and fled. He has not been seen in New Castle since that day, and it is supposed that he has returned to Sussex county for the purpose of continuing in private his dalliance with the Muses. Colonel Bangs appears to have abandoned the idea of establishing a department of obituary poetry, and the *Argus* has resumed its accustomed aspect of dreariness.

It may fairly boast, however, that once during its career it has produced a profound impression upon the community.

MAX ADLER.

A BABY'S RATTLE.

I.

- ONLY a baby's rattle:
 But I think if you offered me gold,
 More than my brain could dream of,
 Or more than my hands could hold—
 For that worthless toy, I should answer
 You cannot buy the tears
 Of love and of joy, the remembrance
 Of all that it means for all years.

II.

She came when the May-time scattered
 • May-buds upon holt and lea;
 And the glint of the sunshine seemed sweeter,
 And a new song was sung by the sea.
 'Twas a page from the book of Creation,
 With an imprint I knew was Divine:
 And I felt the infinite yearning
 For the new life sprung from mine.

Ah me! how we loved our blossom!
 And it scarce seems days ago
 That she crowed and laughed in the summer,
 And faded in winter snow.

It seems like a vision remembered
 Of death in unrestful sleep,
 When fearsome thoughts come upon you,
 As storms brood over the deep.

And whenever I hear the laughter
 That rings from a child at play,
 I think of our dear dead snowdrop,
 And it seems but yesterday.

III.

The May-time had changed to summer
 And the roses of August come;
 The birds sang blithe in the branches
 But blither the birdie at home.

The cynic may sneer at the feeling
 For a cold hard creed is rife;
 But I know that my love for my darling
 Was my purest thought in life.

She grew with the summer's fruitage,
 But in wan autumnal days
 She faded, it seemed, like the leaflets
 • That strewed the woodland ways.

It was hard to mark, and still harder
 To think that the hopes we kept
 Must be buried away with old fancies,
 And dreams that in silence slept.

Were we never to see her joyous,
 In childhood's innocent play?
 Ah, no! She was called, and left us,
 And it seems but yesterday.

IV.

At last—how well I remember
 The long and lingering night,
 When we watched by the tiny cradle
 Till the morning's earliest light!
 And then, when the desolate morning
 Shone cold through the window-bars,
 Lo! God had taken our snowdrop,
 To blossom beyond the stars.
 It was hard to bow in submission,
 • When we thought of the vacant place;
 And there, within the cradle,
 The white little baby-face.

Only one thought could comfort,
 The echo of words Divine;
 That, tender as any mother,
 By the waters of Palestine,

He spake, who bade the children
 Draw near on the sacred sod;
 When He stretched out hands of blessing—
 "Of such is the kingdom of God."

II. SAVILE CLARKE.

UP AT A VILLA—DOWN IN THE CITY.

(AS DISTINGUISHED BY AN ITALIAN PERSON
 OF QUALITY.)

HAD I but plenty of money, money enough and to spare,
 The house for me, no doubt, were a house in the city-square.

Ah such a life, such a life, as one leads at the window there!

Something to see, by Bacchus, something to hear, at least!

There, the whole day long, one's life is a perfect feast;

While up at a villa one lives, I maintain it, no more than a beast.

Well now, look at our villa! stuck like the horns of a bull

Just on a mountain's edge as bare as the creature's skull,

Save a mere shag of a bush with hardly a leaf to pull!

I scratch my own, sometimes, to see if the hair's turned wool.

But the city, oh the city,—the square with the houses! Why?

They are stone-faced, white as a curd, there's something to take the eye!

Houses in four straight lines, not a single front awry!

You watch who crosses and gossips, who saunters, who hurries by:

Green blinds, as a matter of course, to draw when the sun gets high ;
And the shops with fanciful signs which are painted properly.

What of a villa ? Though winter be over in March by rights,
'Tis May perhaps ere the snow shall have withered well off the heights :
You've the brown ploughed land before, where the oxen steam and wheeze,
And the hills over-smoked behind by the faint grey olive trees.

Is it better in May, I ask you ? you've summer all at once ;
In the day he leaps complete with a few strong April suns !
'Mid the sharp short emerald wheat, scarce risen three fingers well,
The wild tulip, at end of its tube, blows out its great red bell,
Like a thin clear bubble of blood, for the children to pick and sell.

Is it ever hot in the square ? There's a fountain to spout and splash !
In the shade it sings and springs ; in the shine such foam-bows flash
On the horses with curling fish-tails, that prance and paddle and pash
Round the lady atop in the coach—fifty gazers do not abash,
Though all that she wears is some weeds round her waist in a sort of sash !

All the year long at the villa nothing's to see though you linger,
Except yon cypress that points like Death's lean lifted forefinger.
Some thick fireflies pretty, when they mix in the corn and mingle,
Or thrud the stinking hemp till the stalks of it seem a-tingle.
Late August or early September, the stunning cicada is shrill,
And the bees keep their tiresome whine round the resinous firs on the hill.
Enough of the seasons—I spare you the months of the fever and chill.

Ere opening your eyes in the city, the blessed church-bells begin :
No sooner the bells leave off, than the diligence rattles in :
You get the pick of the news, and it costs you never a pin.
By-and-by there's the travelling doctor gives pills, lets blood, draws teeth ;
Or the Pulcinello-trumpet breaks up the market beneath.

At the post-office such a scene-picture—the new play, piping hot !
And a notice how, only this morning, three liberal thieves were shot.

Above it, behold the archbishop's most fatherly of rebukes,
And beneath, with his crown and his lion, some little new law of the Duke's !
Or a sonnet with flowery marge, to the Reverend Don So-and-so
Who is Dante, Boccaccio, Petrarca, Saint Jerome, and Cicero,

“ And moreover ” (the sonnet goes rhyming), “ the skirts of St. Paul has reached,
Having preached us those six Lent-lectures more unctuous than ever he preached.”

Noon strikes—here sweeps the procession ! our Lady borne smiling and smart
With a pink gauze gown all spangles, and seven swords stuck in her heart !

Bang, whang, whang, goes the drum, *tootle-tootle* the fife ;

No keeping one's haunches still : it's the greatest pleasure in life.

But, bless you, it's dear—it's dear ! fowls, wine, at double the rate.

They have clapped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays passing the gate

It's a horror to think of. And so, the villa for me, not the city !

Beggars can scarcely be choosers—but still—ah, the pity, the pity !

Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls and sandals,

And the penitents dressed in white shirts, a-holding the yellow candles.

One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with handles,

And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better prevention of scandals.

Bang, whang, whang, goes the drum, *tootle-tootle* the fife.

Oh, a day in the city-square, there is no such pleasure in life !

ROBERT BROWNING.

By permission of Messrs. SMITH, ELDER & CO.

THE AMERICAN FOREST GIRL.

WILDLY and mournfully the Indian drum
On the deep hush of moonlight forests broke—
“ Sing us a death song for ~~time~~ hour is come ! ”
So the red warriors to their captive spoke.
Still, and amid those dusky forms alone,
A youth, a fair-haired youth of England, stood,
Like a king's son ; though from his cheek had flown
The mantling crimson of the Island blood,

And his press'd lips looked marble. Fiercely
bright
And high around him, blazed the fires of night,
Rocking beneath the cedars, to and fro,
As the wind passed, and with a fitful glow
Lighting the victim's face; but who could tell
Of what within his secret heart befell,
Known but to Heaven that hour? Perchance a
thought

Of his far home, then so intensely wrought,
That its full image, pictured to his eye
On the dark ground of mortal agony,
Rose clear as day! And he might see the band
Of his young sisters, wandering hand in hand,
Where the laburnum drooped; or haply binding
The jasmine up the door's low pillars winding;
Or, as day closed upon their gentle mirth,
Gathering, with braided hair, around the hearth,
Where sat their mother; and that mother's face,
Its grave, sweet smile yet wearing in the place
Where so it ever smiled! Perchance the prayer
Learned at her knee came back on his despair;
The blessing from her voice, the very tone,
Of her "Good-night" might breathe from boy-
hood gone!

He started and looked up—thick cypress boughs,
Full of strange sounds, waved o'er him, darkly
red,

In the broad, stormy firelight; savage brows,
With tall plumes crested and wild hues o'er-
spread,

Girt him, like feverish phantoms; and pale stars
Looked through the branches as through funeral
bars,

Shedding no hope. He knew, he felt his doom:

"Oh! what a tale to shadow with its gloom,
That happy hall in England!"

Idle fear;

Would the winds tell it? Who might dream or
hear

The secrets of the forests? To the stake

They bound him; and that proud young soldier
strove

His father's spirit in his breast to wake,

Trusting to die in silence! He, the love
Of many hearts!—the fondly rear'd—the fair,
Gladdening all eyes to see! And fetter'd there
He stood beside his death-pyre, and the brand
Flamed up to light it in the chieftain's hand.
He thought upon his God. Hush! hark!—a cry
Breaks on the stern and dread solemnity.

A step hath pierced the ring! Who dares in-
trude

On the dark hunters in their vengeful mood?

A girl—a young slight girl—a fawnlike child
Of green savannas and the leafy wild,
Springing, unmark'd till then, as some lone flower
Happy because the sunshine is its dower:
Yet one that knew how early tears are shed,
For hers had mourned a playmate brother dead.

She had sat gazing on the victim long,
Until the pity of her soul grew strong;
And, by its passions deepening fervour sway'd
E'en to the stake she rushed, and gently laid
His bright head on her bosom, and around
His form her slender arms to shield it wound,
Like close Lianes; then raised her glittering eye
And clear-toned voice that said, "He shall not
die!"

"He shall not die!"—the gloomy forest thrill'd
To that sweet sound. A sudden wonder fell
On the fierce throng; and heart and hand were
still'd,

Struck down, as by the whisper of a spell.

They gazed, their dark souls bow'd before the
maid,

She of the dancing step in wood and glade!

And as her cheek flush'd through its olive hue,

As her black tresses to the night-wind flew,

Something o'ermaster'd them from that young
mien—

Something of heaven in silence felt and seen;

And seeming to their child-like faith a token

That the Great Spirit her voice had spoken.

They loosed the bonds that held their captive's
breath;

From his pale lips they took the cup of death;

They quench'd the brand beneath the cypress
tree;

"Away," they cried, "young stranger, thou art
free!"

MRS. HEYMAN.

RAMON.

REFUGIO MINE, NORTHERN MEXICO.

DRUNK and senseless in his place,

Prone and sprawling on his face,

More like brute than any man

Alive or dead,—

By his great pump out of gear,

Lay the peon engineer,

Waking only just to hear,

Overhead,

Angry tones that called his name,

Oaths and cries of bitter blame—

Woke to hear all this, and waking, turned and fled!

"To the man who'll bring to me,"

Cried Intendant Harry Lee,—

Harry Lee, the English foreman of the mine,—

"Bring the sot alive or dead,

I will give to him," he said,

"Fifteen hundred pesos down,

Just to set the rascal's crown

Underneath this heel of mine:

Since but death
Deserves the man whose deed,
Be it vice or want of heed,
Stops the pumps that give us breath,—
Stops the pumps that suck the death
From the poisoned lower levels of the mine!"

No one answered, for a cry
From the shaft rose up on high;
And shuffling, scrambling, tumbling from below,
Came the miners each, the bolder
Mounting on the weaker's shoulder,
Grappling, clinging to their hold or
Letting go,
As the weaker gasped and fell
From the ladder to the well,—
To the poisoned pit of hell
Down below!

"To the man who sets them free,"
Cried the foreman, Harry Lee,—
Harry Lee, the English foreman of the mine,—
"Brings them out and sets them free,
I will give that man," said he,
"Twice that sum, who with a rope
Face to face with Death shall cope.
Let him come who dares to hope!"
"Hold your peace!" some one replied,
Standing by the foreman's side;
"There has one already gone, whoc'er he be!"

Then they held their breath with awe,
Pulling on the rope, and saw
Fainting figures reappear,
On the black rope swinging clear,
Fastened by some skilful hand from below;
Till a score the level gained,
And but one alone remained,—
He the hero and the last,
He whose skilful hand made fast
The long line that brought them back to hope and
cheer!

Haggard, gasping, down dropped he
At the feet of Harry Lee,—
Harry Lee, the English foreman of the mine;
"I have come," he gasped, "to claim
Both rewards. Señor, my name
Is Ramon!
I'm the drunken engineer,—
I'm the coward, Señor—" Here
He fell over, by that sign
Dead as stone!

BRET HARTE.

THE TRYSTING.

ONE winter night, at half-past nine,
Cold, tired, and cross, and muddy,
I had come home, too late to dine
And supper, with cigars and wine,
Was waiting in the study.

There was a strangeness in the room,
And Something white and wavy
Was standing near me in the gloom—
I took it for the carpet-broom
Left by that careless slavey.

But presently the Thing began
To shiver and to sneeze:
On which I said, "Come, come, my man!
That's a most inconsiderate plan.
Less noise there, if you please!"

"I've caught a cold," the Thing replies
"Out there upon the landing."
I turned to look in some surprise,
And there, before my very eyes,
A little Ghost was standing!

He trembled when he caught my eye,
And got behind a chair.
"How came you here," I said, "and why?
I never saw a thing so shy.
Come out! Don't shiver there!"

He said, "I'd gladly tell you how,
And also tell you why;
But" (here he gave a little bow)
"You're in so bad a temper now,
You'd think it all a lie.

"And as to being in a fright,
Allow me to remark
That Ghosts have just as good a right,
In every way, to fear the light,
As men to fear the dark."

"No plea," said I, "can well excuse
Such cowardice in you:
For Ghosts can visit when they choose,
Whereas we humans can't refuse
To grant the interview."

He said, "A flutter of alarm
Is not unnatural, is it?
I really feared you meant some harm;
But, now I see that you are calm,
Let me explain my visit.

"Houses are classed, I beg to state,
According to the number
Of Ghosts that they accommodate:
(The Tenant merely counts as *weight*,
With Coals and other lumber).

"This is a 'one-ghost' house, and you
When you arrived last summer,
May have remarked a Spectre who
Was doing all that Ghosts can do
To welcome the new-comer.

"In Villas this is always done—
However cheaply rented:
For, though of course there's less of fun
When there is only room for one,
Ghosts have to be contented.

"That Spectre left you on the Third—
 Since then you've not been haunted :
 For, as he never sent us word,
 • 'Twas quite by accident we heard
 That any one was wanted.

"A Spectre has first choice, by right,
 In filling up a vacancy ;
 Then Phantom, Goblin, Elf, and Sprite—
 If all these fail them, they invite
 The nicest Ghoul that they can see.

"The Spectres said the place was low,
 • And that you kept bad wine :
 So, as a Phantom had to go,
 And I was first, of course, you know,
 • I couldn't well decline."

"No doubt," said I, "they settled who
 Was fittest to be sent :
 Yet still to choose a brat like you,
 To haunt a man of forty-two,
 Was no great compliment!"

"I'm not so young, sir," he replied,
 "As you might think. The fact is,
 In caverns by the waterside,
 And other places that I've tried,
 I've had a lot of practice :

"But I have never taken yet
 A strict domestic part,
 And in my flurry I forget
 The Five Good Rules of Etiquette
 We have to know by heart."

My sympathies were warming fast
 Towards the little fellow ;
 He was so utterly aghast
 At having found a Man at last,
 And looked so scared and yellow.

"At least," I said, "I'm glad to find
 A Ghost is not a *dumb* thing !
 But pray sit down : you'll feel inclined
 (If, like myself, you have not dined)
 To take a snack of something :

"Though, certainly, you don't appear
 A thing to offer *food* to !
 And then I shall be glad to hear—
 • If you will say them loud and clear—
 The Rules that you allude to."

"Thanks ! You shall hear them by-and-by,
 This is a piece of luck !"

"What may I offer you ?" said I.
 "Well, since you're so kind, I'll try
 A little bit of duck.

"One slice ! And may I ask you for
 Another drop of gravy ?"
 I sat and looked at him in awe,
 For certainly I never saw
 A thing so white and wavy.

And still he seemed to grow more white,
 More vapoury, and wavier—
 Seen in the dim and flickering light,
 As he proceeded to recite
 His "Maxims of Behaviour."

THE FIVE RULES.

"My First—but don't suppose," he said,
 "I'm setting you a riddle—
 Is—if your Victim be in bed,
 • Don't touch the curtains at his head,
 But take them in the middle,

"And wave them slowly in and out,
 While drawing them asunder ;
 And in a minute's time, no doubt,
 He'll raise his head and look about
 With eyes of wrath and wonder.

"And here you must on no pretence
 Make the first observation.
 Wait for the Victim to commence :
 No Ghost of any common sense
 Begins a conversation.

"If he should say '*How came you here ?*'
 (The way that *you* began, sir),
 In such a case your course is clear—
 '*On the bat's back, my little dear !*'
 Is the appropriate answer.

"If after this he says no more,
 You'd best perhaps curtain your
 Exertions—go and shake the door,
 And then, if he begins to snore,
 You'll know the thing's a failure.

"By day, if he should be alone—
 At home or on a walk—
 You merely give a hollow groan,
 To indicate the kind of tone
 In which you mean to talk.

"But if you find him with his friends,
 The thing is rather harder.
 In such a case success depends
 On picking up some candle ends,
 Or butter in the larder.

"With this you make a kind of slide
 (It answers best with suct),
 On which you must contrive to glide,
 And swing yourself from side to side—
 One soon learns how to do it.

"The second tells us what is right
 In ceremonious calls :
 '*First burn a blue or crimson light*'
 (A thing I quite forgot to-night),
 '*Then scratch the door or walls.*'"

I said, "You'll visit *here* no more,
 If you attempt the Guy.
 I'll have no bonfires on my floor—
 And, as for scratching at the door,
 I'd like to see you try !"

- "The Third was written to protect
The interests of the Victim,
And tells us, as I recollect,
*To treat him with a grave respect,
And not to contradict him.*"
- "That's plain," said I, "as Tare and Tret,
To any comprehension :
I only wish *some* Ghosts I've met
Would not so *constantly* forget
The maxim that you mention !"
- "Perhaps," he said, "*you* first transgressed
The laws of hospitality :
All Ghosts instinctively detest
The Man that fails to treat his guest
With proper cordiality.
- "If you address a Ghost as 'Thing !'
Or strike him with a hatchet,
He is permitted by the King
To drop all *formal* parleying—
And then you're *sure* to catch it !
- "The Fourth prohibits trespassing
Where other Ghosts are quartered—
And those convicted of the thing
(Unless when pardoned by the King)
Must instantly be slaughtered.
- "That simply means 'be cut up small':
Ghosts soon unite anew :
The process scarcely hurts at all—
Not more than when *you're* what you call
'Cut up' by a Review.
- "The Fifth is one you may prefer
That I should quote entire :—
*The King must be addressed as 'Sir,'
This, from a simple courtier,
Is all the laws require :*
- "But, should you wish to do the thing
With out-and-out politeness,
Accost him as '*My Goblin King !*'
And always use, in answering,
The phrase '*Your Royal Whiteness !*'"
- "I'm getting rather hoarse, I fear,
After so much reciting :
So, if you don't object, my dear,
We'll try a glass of bitter beer—
I think it looks inviting."

LEWIS CARROLL.

From "Phantasmagoria."
By Permission of the Author.

THE SWORD EXERCISE.

THE hill opposite one end of Bathsheba's dwelling extended into an uncultivated tract of land, covered at this season with tall thickets of brake

fern, plump and diaphanous from recent rapid growth, and radiant in hues of clear and untainted green.

At eight o'clock this midsummer evening, whilst the bristling ball of gold in the west still swept the tips of the ferns with its long, luxuriant rays, a soft brushing-by of garments might have been heard among them, and Bathsheba appeared in their midst, their soft, feathery arms caressing her up to her shoulders. She paused, turned, went back over the hill and down again to her own door, whence she cast a farewell glance upon the spot she had just left, having resolved not to remain near the place after all.

She saw a dim spot of artificial red moving round the shoulder of the rise. It disappeared on the other side.

She waited one minute—two minutes—thought of Troy's disappointment at her non-fulfilment of a promised engagement, tossed on her hat again, ran up the garden, clambered over the bank, and followed the original direction. She was now literally trembling and panting at this her temerity in such an errand undertaking; her breath came and went quickly, and her eyes shone with an infrequent light. Yet go she must. She reached the verge of a pit in the middle of the ferns. Troy stood in the bottom, looking up towards her.

"I heard you rustling through the fern before I saw you," he said, coming up and giving her his hand to help her down the slope.

The pit was a hemispherical concave, naturally formed, with a top diameter of about thirty feet, and shallow enough to allow the sunshine to reach their heads. Standing in the centre, the sky overhead was met by a circular horizon of fern : this grew nearly to the bottom of the slope and then abruptly ceased. The middle within the belt of verdure was floored with a thick flossy carpet of moss and grass intermingled, so yielding that the foot was half buried within it.

"Now," said Troy, producing the sword, which, as he raised it into the sunlight, gleamed a sort of greeting, like a living thing, "first, we have four right and four left cuts; four right and four left thrusts. Infantry cuts and guards are more interesting than ours, to my mind; but they are not so swashing. They have seven cuts and three thrusts. So much as a preliminary. Well, next, our cut one is as if you were sowing your corn—so." Bathsheba saw a sort of rainbow, upside down in the air, and Troy's arm was still again. "Cut two, as if you were hedging—so. Three, as if you were reaping—so. Four, as if you were threshing—in that way. Then the same on the left. The thrusts are these : one, two, three, four, right; one, two, three, four, left." He repeated them. "Have 'em again?" he said. "One, two—"

She hurriedly interrupted: "I'd rather not;

though I don't mind your twos and fours; but your ones and threes are terrible!"

"Very well. I'll let you off the ones and threes. Next, cuts, points and guards altogether." Troy duly exhibited them. "Then there's pursuing practice, in this way." He gave the movements as before. "There, those are the stereotyped forms. The infantry have two most diabolical upward cuts, which we are too humane to use. Like this—three, four."

"How murderous and bloodthirsty!"

"They are rather deathly. Now I'll be more interesting, and let you see some loose play—giving all the cuts and points, infantry and cavalry, quicker than lightning, and as promiscuously—with just enough rule to regulate instinct and yet not to fetter it. You are my antagonist, with this difference from real warfare, that I shall miss you every time by one hair's breadth, or perhaps two. Mind you don't flinch, whatever you do."

"I'll be sure not to!" she said invincibly.

He pointed to about a yard in front of him.

Bathsheba's adventurous spirit was beginning to find some grains of relish in these highly novel proceedings. She took up her position as directed, facing Troy.

"Now, just to learn whether you have pluck enough to let me do what I wish, I'll give you a preliminary test."

He flourished the sword by way of introduction number two, and the next thing of which she was conscious was that the point and blade of the sword were darting with a gleam towards her left side, just above her hip; then of their reappearance on her right side, emerging as it were from between her ribs, having apparently passed through her body. The third item of consciousness was that of seeing the same sword, perfectly clean and free from blood, held vertically in Troy's hand (in the position technically called "recover swords"). All was as quick as electricity.

"Oh!" she cried out in affright, pressing her hand to her side. "Have you run me through? No, you have not! Whatever have you done?"

"I have not touched you," said Troy, quietly. "It was mere sleight-of-hand. The sword passed behind you. Now you are not afraid, are you? Because if you are, I can't perform. I give my word that I will not only not hurt you, but not once touch you."

"I don't think I am afraid. You are quite sure you will not hurt me?"

"Quite sure."

"Is the sword very sharp?"

"Oh no—only stand as still as a statue. Now!"

In an instant the atmosphere was transformed to Bathsheba's eyes. Beams of light caught from the low sun's rays; above, around, in front of her, well-nigh shut out earth and heaven—all emitted in the marvellous evolutions of Troy's reflecting

blade, which seemed everywhere at once, and yet nowhere specially. These circling gleams were accompanied by a keen rush that was almost a whistling—also springing from all sides of her at once. In short, she was enclosed in a firmament of light and of sharp hisses, resembling a sky full of meteors close at hand.

Never since the broadsword became the national weapon had there been more dexterity shown in its management than by the hands of Sergeant Troy, and never had he been in such splendid temper for the performance as now in the evening sunshine among the ferns with Bathsheba. It may safely be asserted, with respect to the closeness of his cuts, that had it been possible for the edge of the sword to leave in the air a permanent substance wherever it flew past, the space left untouched would have been a complete mould of Bathsheba's figure.

Behind the luminous streams of this *aurora militaris* she could see the hue of Troy's sword arm, spread in a scarlet haze over the space covered by its motions, like a twanged harp-string, and behind all, Troy himself, mostly facing her; sometimes, to show the rear cuts, half turned away, his eye nevertheless always keenly measuring her breadth and outline, and his lips tightly closed in sustained effort. Next, his movements lapsed slower, and she could see them individually. The hissing of the sword had ceased, and he stopped entirely.

"That outer loose lock of hair wants tidying," he said, before she had moved or spoken. "Wait: I'll do it for you."

An arc of silver shone on her right side: the sword had descended. The lock dropped to the ground.

"Bravely borne!" said Troy. "You didn't flinch a shade's thickness. Wonderful in a woman!"

"It was because I didn't expect it. Oh, you have spoilt my hair!"

"Only once more."

"No—no! I am afraid of you—indeed I am!" she cried.

"I won't touch you at all—not even your hair. I am only going to kill that caterpillar settling on you. Now: still!"

It appeared that a caterpillar had come from the fern and chosen the front of her bodice as his resting-place. She saw the point glisten towards her bosom, and seemingly enter it. Bathsheba closed her eyes in the full persuasion that she was killed at last. However, feeling just as usual, she opened them again.

"There it is—look," said the sergeant, holding his sword before her eyes.

The caterpillar was spitted upon its point.

"Why, it is magic!" said Bathsheba, amazed.

"Oh no—dexterity, I merely gave point to your bosom where the caterpillar was, and instead

of running you through, checked the extension a thousandth of an inch short of your surface."

"But how could you chop off a curl of my hair with a sword that has no edge?"

"No edge! This sword will shave like a razor. Look here."

He touched the palm of his hand with the blade, and then, lifting it, showed her a thin shaving of scarf-skin dangling therefrom.

"But you said before beginning that it was blunt and couldn't cut me!"

"That was to get you to stand still, and so ensure your safety. The risk of injuring you through your moving was too great not to compel me to tell you an untruth to obviate it."

She shuddered. "I have been within an inch of my life, and didn't know it!"

"More precisely speaking, you have been within half an inch of being pared alive two hundred and ninety-five times."

"Cruel, cruel, 'tis of you!"

"You have been perfectly safe, nevertheless. My sword never errs." And Troy returned the weapon to the scabbard.

Bathsheba, overcome by a hundred tumultuous feelings resulting from the scene, abstractedly sat down on a tuft of heather.

"I must leave you now," said Troy, softly. "And I'll venture to take and keep this in remembrance of you."

She saw him stoop to the grass, pick up the winding lock which he had severed from her manifold tresses, twist it round his fingers, unfasten a button in the breast of his coat, and carefully put it inside. She felt powerless to withstand or deny him. He was altogether too much for her, and Bathsheba seemed as one who, facing a reviving wind, finds it blow so strongly that it stops the breath.

He drew near and said, "I must be leaving you." He drew nearer still. A minute later and she saw his scarlet form disappear amid the ferny thicket, almost in a flash, like a brand swiftly waved.

That minute's interval had brought the blood beating into her face, set her stinging as if aflame to the very hollows of her feet, and enlarged emotion to a compass which quite swamped thought. It had brought upon her a stroke resulting, as did that of Moses in Horeb, in a liquid stream—here a stream of tears. She felt like one who has sinned a great sin.

The circumstance had been the gentle dip of Troy's mouth downwards upon her own. He had kissed her.

THOMAS HARDY.

From "Far from the Madding Crowd."

By permission of Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.

THE COLUMN OF LUXOR.

I.

On! grey-headed column of Luxor!

Oh! ancient and eloquent stone!

That standest supreme in thy sadness

'Mid splendour and glare—but alone!

They brought thee with pomp and rejoicing,

A trophy to pamper their fame;

With sound of the drum and the trumpet,

And salvos, and shouts of acclaim:

Oh! preach to this change-loving people

From depths of thy memories vast,

And, proud as they are of the present,

Tell them the past!

II.

Yet, no, it were idle to show them

The waifs and the shipwrecks of Time;

They know that the mighty have perished,

Laid low in their folly or crime.

They know that the kingdoms and empires

That grew in the ages of old

Were swept from their places, like footmarks

On sands where the ocean has rolled.

Tradition itself has forgot them,

Their deeds and their names disappear,

Or live but in falsified echoes,

Vexing the ear.

III.

They know that Sesostris and Pharaoh

Were lords of the world in their day;

That Babylon, Luxor, and Memphis

Were haughty—yet vanished away.

The tree was unsound, and it perished;

The fruit had a worm at the core;

The ship had no pilot to guide it,

And broke on the shoals of the shore.

Oh! eloquent stone of the desert,

Such teachings are idle and vain,

And fall on a storm-troubled ocean

Lightly as rain.

IV.

Speak home to their business and passions!

Though Egypt was fated to fall,

And Carthage, and Greece, and Phœnicia,

Are as the dead to our call:

Though some disappeared like a vapour,

Their name of to-day will not see

The ^{ghost} of the past in the present;

Or ^{think} that what was is to be.

The ^{surge} in thy shadow—

They roar in their ebb and their flow,

And, puffed with the wind of their greatness,

Shout as they go:

V.

"Our France is the Empress of nations,
 Her grandeur is yet in its birth,
 Her people are wisest and bravest,
 The pride and example of earth.
 She fills the wide world with her glory;
 She speaks—and her rivals are dumb;
 And all she achieves is an omen
 Of greater achievements to come.
 Immortal in youth and in wisdom,
 She turns her calm face to the sky,
 And Ruin, unable to smite her,
 Passes her by."

VI.

And yet, only twenty short summers
 Have bloomed since thou camest to France;
 Come! tell them the scenes thou hast witnessed,
 To warn them of change and of chance!
 They bore thee—a pledge of their triumph—
 From shores where their fathers had bled;
 They raised thee 'mid thunder of cannon,
 And tricoloured banners outspread.
 The King, with his courtiers and children,
 Looked round him, exulting and proud,
 And said, "I am firm! I am happy!
 Mine is the crowd."

VII.

Again came a multitude thronging—
 Ashamed of the idol they made,
 And lo! the great King and his glory—
 Came down to the dust—as they bade!
 He fled, though with none to pursue him,
 And left not a relic behind;
 Neither son, nor successor, nor mourner—
 Dried leaf, on the popular wind!
 His throne made a bonfire for outcasts,
 And blood-sprinkled beggars lay down,
 And trailed through the filth of the gutter,
 Ermine and crown.

VIII.

They set up a King to succeed him,
 King Liberty, Monarch adored;
 They told him to rule as it pleased him,
 And gave him for sceptre, a sword.
 They throned him, and crowned him with
 garlands,
 And knelt at his feet in the mire,
 And called him the saviour of nations,
 Their model, their friend, their desire.
 King Liberty, drunken and frantic,
 Let Anarchy loose on his slaves,
 And plundered and murdered his people,
 Dancing on graves.

IX.

IX

And they called in their desperate anguish,
 For a potent and resolute will:
 For a man with a heart made of iron,
 For a hand that was ready to kill;
 For a master to curb and to conquer,
 This pestilent Lord of the streets,
 To chain him, and gag him, and scourge him,
 Or ship him to tropical heats,
 And losing their senses in terror,
 They cried from the depths of despair
 "Oh! save us, thou man of the sabre!
 Strike, do not spare!"

X.

The master they wanted was ready—
 His sceptre and crown were decreed,
 And vaulting aloft like a horseman,
 Who knows how to govern his steed,
 He trampled the earth like a Centaur,
 And trod his opponents to dust,
 While the millions, vainglorious and grateful,
 Cried "Viva! In thee is our trust!
 In thee is our trust, oh Napoleon!
 The rabble are wicked and blind:—
 For better one ruler than many—
 Lash them and bind!"

XI.

He bettered the lesson they taught him,—
 And rode to his stirrups in gore,
 And Anarchy's carcass lies bleeding,
 Unburied, with none to deplore.
 He gives them permission to barter,—
 To labour, to plod, and to thrive,
 To gamble, to cheat, to adventure,
 To sing, and to dance, and to wive.
 But woe on their heads, if presuming,
 They dare but to reason, and think!
 Is *He* not the Lord of opinion?—
 Back from the brink!—

XII.

Back! back! from the brink of Destruction!—
 Back! back to your counters and wares—
 Grow fat, crying "Long live Napoleon!"
 And leave him his crown and his cares!—
 Oh! grey-headed column of Luxor!
 Oh! ancient and eloquent stone!
 That standest 'mid splendour and beauty,
 So desolate, awful, and lone—
 Go, preach to this change-loving people—
 From depths of thy memories vast,
 And proud, as they are of the present,
 Show them the past!

CHARLES MACKAY.

Paris, 1853.

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HOW MR. SAPSEA CEASED TO BE A MEMBER OF THE EIGHT CLUB.

TOLD BY HIMSELF.

WISHING to take the air, I proceeded by a circuitous route to the Club, it being our weekly night of meeting. I found that we mustered our full strength. We were enrolled under the denomination of the Eight Club. We were eight in number; we met at eight o'clock during eight months of the year; we played eight games of four-handed cribbage, at eightpence the game; our frugal supper was composed of eight rolls, eight mutton chops, eight pork sausages, eight baked potatoes, eight marrow-bones, with eight toasts, and eight bottles of ale. There may, or may not, be a certain harmony of colour in the ruling idea of this (to adopt a phrase of our lively neighbours) reunion. It was a little idea of mine.

A somewhat popular member of the Eight Club was a member by the name of Kimber. By profession a dancing-master. A common-place, hopeful sort of man, wholly destitute of dignity or knowledge of the world.

As I entered the club-room, Kimber was making the remark: "And he still half-believes him to be very high in the Church."

In the act of hanging up my hat on the eighth peg by the door, I caught Kimber's visual ray. He lowered it, and passed a remark on the next change of the moon. I did not take particular notice of this at the moment, because the world was often pleased to be a little shy of ecclesiastical topics in my presence. For I felt that I was picked out (though perhaps only through a coincidence) to a certain extent to represent what I call our glorious constitution in Church and State. The phrase may be objected to by captious minds; but I own to it as mine. I threw it off in argument some little time back. I said: "OUR GLORIOUS CONSTITUTION IN CHURCH AND STATE."

Another member of the Eight Club was Peartree; also member of the Royal College of Surgeons. Mr. Peartree is not accountable to me for his opinions, and I say no more of them here than that he attends the poor gratis whenever they want him, and is not the parish doctor. Mr. Peartree may justify it to the grasp of *his* mind thus to do his republican utmost to bring an appointed officer into contempt. Suffice it that Mr. Peartree can never justify it to the grasp of *mine*.

Between Peartree and Kimber there was a sickly sort of feeble-minded alliance. It came under my particular notice when I sold off Kimber by auction. (Goods taken in execution.) He was a widower in a white under-waistcoat, and slight shoes with bows, and had two daughters not ill-looking. Indeed the reverse. Both daughters taught dancing in scholastic establishments for Young Ladies—had done so at Mrs. Sapsea's; nay Twinkle-

ton's—and both, in giving lessons, presented the unwomanly spectacle of having little fiddles tucked under their chins. In spite of which the younger, one might, if I am correctly informed—I will raise the veil so far as to say I *KNOW* she might—have soured for life from this degrading taint, but for having the class of mind allotted to what I call the common herd, and being so incredibly dévoid of veneration as to become painfully ludicrous.

When I sold off Kimber without reserve, Peartree (as poor as he can hold together) had several prime household lots knocked down to him. I am not to be blinded; and of course it was as plain to me what he was going to do with them, as it was that he was a brown hulking sort of revolutionary subject who had been in India with the soldiers, and ought (for the sake of society) to have his neck broke. I saw the lots shortly afterwards in Kimber's lodgings—through the window—and I easily made out that there had been a sneaking pretence of lending them till better times. A man with a smaller knowledge of the world than myself might have been led to suspect that Kimber had held back money from his creditors and fraudulently bought the goods. But, besides that I knew for certain he had no money, I knew that this would involve a species of forethought not to be made compatible with the frivolity of a caperer, inoculating other people with capering, for his bread.

As it was the first time I had seen either of those two since the sale, I kept myself in what I call Abeyance. When selling him up, I had delivered a few remarks—shall I say a little homily?—concerning Kimber, which the world did regard as more than usually worth notice. I had come up into my pulpit, it was said, uncommonly like—and a murmur of recognition had repeated his (I will not name whose) title, before I spoke. I had then gone on to say that all present would find, in the first page of the catalogue that was lying before them, in the last paragraph before the first lot, the following words: "Sold in pursuance of a writ of execution 'issued by a creditor.'" I had then proceeded to remind my friends that however frivolous, not to say contemptible, the business by which a man got his goods together, still his goods were as dear to him, and as cheap to society (if sold without reserve) as though his pursuits had been of a character that would bear serious contemplation. I had then divided my text (if I may be allowed so to call it) into three heads: firstly, Sold; secondly, In pursuance of a writ of execution; thirdly, Issued by a creditor; with a few moral reflections on each, and winding up with, "Now to the first lot" in a manner that was complimented when I afterwards mingled with my hearers.

So, not being certain on what terms I and Kimber stood, I was grave, I was chilling. Kimber, however, moving to me, I moved to Kimber (I was the creditor who had issued the writ. Not that it matters.)

"I was alluding, Mr. Sapsea," said Kimber, "to a stranger who entered into conversation with me in the street as I came to the club. He had been speaking to you just before, it seemed, by the churchyard; and though you had told him who you were, I could hardly persuade him that you were not high in the 'Church'"

"Idiot!" said Peartree.

"Ass!" said Kimber.

"Idiot and Ass!" said the other five members.

"Idiot and Ass, gentlemen," I remonstrated, looking around me, "are strong expressions to apply to a young man of good appearance and address." My generosity was roused; I own it.

"You'll admit that he must be a Fool," said Peartree.

"You can't deny that he must be a Blockhead," said Kimber.

Their tone of disgust amounted to being offensive. Why should the young man be so calumniated? What had he done? He had only made an innocent and natural mistake. I controlled my generous indignation, and said so.

"Natural?" repeated Kimber; "He's a Natural!"

The remaining six members of the Eight Club laughed unanimously. It stung me. It was a scornful laugh. My anger was roused in behalf of an absent, friendless stranger. I rose (for I had been sitting down).

"Gentlemen," I said, with dignity, "I will not remain one of this Club allowing opprobrium to be cast on an unoffending person in his absence. I will not so violate what I call the sacred rites of hospitality. Gentlemen, until you know how to behave yourselves better, I leave you. Gentlemen, until then I withdraw, from this place of meeting, whatever personal qualifications I may have brought into it. Gentlemen, until then you cease to be the Eight Club, and must make the best you can of becoming the Seven."

I put on my hat and retired. As I went down stairs I distinctly heard them give a suppressed cheer. Such is the power of demeanour and knowledge of mankind. I had forced it out of them.

CHARLES DICKENS.

By permission of Messrs. CHAPMAN & HALL.

STARRALORE.

Love has left his mournful traces on that fairest of all faces,

And by many sins and sorrows I am older than of yore:

I can hear my lovers calling, while I feel my spirit falling

To a depth the more appalling: I am falling evermore;
I am falling ever farther from the happy Starralore.

There my spirit haunts and hovers, for there are all my lovers;

I can hear their happy voices on the far off happy shore:

I can feel the breezes blowing, hear the happy rivers flowing,

Where immortal flowers are growing and the birds sing evermore;

In the gardens and the bowers of the happy Starralore.

For no joy has beamed upon me since the evil spirit won me,

And I passed the gates of glory in my fiery youth of yore:

But tho' God himself abhor me, there are lovers asking for me;

There are angels weeping for me in the happy Starralore;

And they call in love and sorrow; call me back for evermore.

There's a wilderness around me; there are seas and mountains bound me;

And the star that rose to light me, it has set for evermore:

For I loved the roar and rattle and the fiery rush of battle,

And no demon's wing was darker than the banner which I bore;

For I fought the holy angels from the blessed Starralore.

But another spell came o'er me, and a woman stood before me

With the looks of love and glory which the blessed angels wore;

And I cried, Now joy betide me! 'tis an angel sent to guide me,

And in beauty walk beside me to the happy Starralore;

God has sent this holy angel His apostate to restore.

It was but an earth-bound spirit; and ah, bootless to inherit

All the gifts of God our Father, all the spirit's love and lore,

While the chain of Beauty bound me; for she wound her white arms round me,

In a sea of passion drowned me, till the spirit could not soar;

And she held me back and led me far away from Starralore.

And I shook her off in sorrow; but she came again to-morrow

In her beauty, and I trembled in my weakness evermore:

And she stood in tears before me when a balmy breeze blew o'er me,
And the fragrance that it bore me was from happy Starralore;
From the bowers and the flowers of the happy Starralore.

And I shook her off in anger when I heard the trumpet's clangour
Call to battle all the heroes nerved as heres were of yore:
But, alas! in vain I started; feeble-limbed and craven-hearted,
All the glory had departed, and my locks of might she shore;
While the shouts of battle reached me from the sons of Starralore.

And she cried, Alas! I love thee as another cannot love thee;
And my bosom is thy pillow; cast me not away therefore!
And she cried, This world of ours has its gardens and its flowers,
And the birds sing in the bowers songs of love for evermore,
As sweet as they sing ever in the happy Starralore.

Ah, why lovest thou the rattle and the rush and roar of battle?
Lo, our flocks are in the valleys! let us garner up our store!
And we'll live a life enchanted: and our homestead shall be haunted
By the happy angels granted to Love's prayers evermore:
Love shall bless us with blithe angels, fair as those of Starralore.

And she cried, In vain I love thee if thou lovest one above me
With the faith and with the fervour that I love thee evermore:
But thy sword is never needed, and thy little aid unheeded;
Ah, let the God of glory fight the foes of Starralore,
While love fills thee, and love thrills thee, to the bosom's happy core!

And her locks of golden lustre wind around me, and they cluster
Round the wings I wear but wave not, and shall wave, ah, nevermore!
And for ever, ever after, I can hear the demon's laughter,
And the feeblest sigh I waft her is Adieu for evermore
To the bowers and the garden and the God of Starralore.

From *Once a Week*.

PAUL RICHARDSON.

THE DEAN'S DILEMMA.

The first scene is the interior of a country police station, a quaint old room with plaster walls, oaken beams, and a Gothic mullioned window looking on to the street. A massive door, with a small sliding wicket and an iron grating, opens to a prisoner's cell. The room is partly furnished as a kitchen, partly as a police station, a copy of the Police Regulations and other official documents and implements hanging on the wall. It is the morning after the events of the previous act.

HANNAH, a buxom, fresh-looking young woman, in a print gown, has been engaged in cooking while singing gaily.

HANNAH. [*Opening a door and calling with a slight dialect.*] Noah, darling!

NOAH. [*From another room—in a rough, country voice.*] Yaas!

HANNAH. You'll have your dinner before you drive your prisoner over to Durnstone, won't ye, darling?

NOAH. Yaas!

HANNAH. [*Closing the door.*] Yaas! Noah in a nice temper to-day over summat. Ah well, I suppose all public characters is liable to irritation. [*There is a knock at the outer door. HANNAH opening it, sees BLORE with a troubled look on his face.*] Well I never! Mr. Blore from the Deannery! Come in! You might knock me down with a—!

BLORE. [*Entering and shaking hands mournfully.*] How do you do, Mrs. Topping?

HANNAH. And how is the dear Dean, bless him; the sweetest soul in the world?

BLORE. [*To himself.*] Good gracious! She doesn't know of hour misfortune. [*To HANNAH.*] I—I 'aven't seen him this morning!

HANNAH. Well, this is real kind of you, calling on an old friend, Edward. When I think that I were cook at the Deannery seven years, and that since I left you, to get wedded, not a soul of you has been nigh me, it do seem hard.

BLORE. Well, you see, 'Annah, the kitchen took humbrage at your marryin' a policeman at Durnstone. It was regarded as a messylance.

HANNAH. Well, now Mr. Topping's got the appointment of Head Constable at St. Marvells, what's that regarded as?

BLORE. A rise on the scales, 'Annah, a decided rise—but still you've honly been a week in St. Marvells and you've got to fight your way hup.

HANNAH. I think I'm as hup as ever I'm like to be.

BLORE. 'Owever, Jane and Sarah and Willis the stable-boy 'ave hunbent so far as to hask me to leave their cards, knowin' I was a callin'.

[*He produces from an old leather pocket-book three very dirty pieces of paste-board which he gives to HANNAH.*]

HANNAH. [*Taking them in her apron with pride.*] Thank 'em kindly. When's their evening?

BLORE. We receive on Toosdays, at the side gate. And 'ow are you, my dear? [*Kissing her cheek.*]

HANNAH. Don't, Edward Blore!

BLORE. Don't! When you was Miss Hevans there wasn't these social barriers, 'Annah!

HANNAH. Shut up! Noah's jealous of the very apronstrings what go round my waist. I'm not so free and 'andy with my kisses now, I can tell you.

BLORE. Then "What is friendship but a name!"

But Mr. Topping isn't indoors now, surely!

HANNAH. [*Nodding her head.*] Um—um!

BLORE. Why, he took a man up last night!

HANNAH. What of it?

BLORE. Why, I thought that when hany harrest was made in St. Marvells, the prisoner was lodged here honly for the night and that the 'ead Constable 'ad to drive 'im over to Durnstone Police Station the first thing in the morning.

HANNAH. That's the rule, but Noah's behind-hand to-day, and ain't going into Durnstone till after dinner.

BLORE. Then the prisoner is now hon the premises!

HANNAH. Yes, he's in our cell.

BLORE. Ah! And where is the hapartment in question?

HANNAH. The cell? That's it!

BLORE. [*Looking round in horror.*] Oh!

HANNAH. The "Strong-box" they call it in St. Marvells.

BLORE. Oh, my goodness, honly fancy! [*Whispering to himself.*] And 'im accustomed to his shavin' water at height and my kindly hand to button his gaiters. Oh, here's a warnin'!

HANNAH. Whatever is the matter with you, Edward?

BLORE. 'Annah, 'Annah, my dear, it's this very prisoner what I 'ave called on you respectin'.

HANNAH. Oh, then the honour ain't a compliment to me, after all, Mr. Blore?

BLORE. I'm killing two birds with one stone, my dear.

HANNAH. [*Throwing the cards into BLORE's hat.*] You can take them back to the Deanery with Mrs. Topping's comps.

BLORE. [*Shaking the cards out of his hat and replacing them in his pocket-book.*] I will leave them hon you again to-morrow, 'Annah. But, 'Annah deary, do you know that this hunfortunate man was took in our stables last night?

HANNAH. No, I never ask Noah nothing about Queen's business. He don't want two women over him!

BLORE. Then you 'avent seen the miserable culprit?

HANNAH. Lor' no. I was in bed hours when Noah brought 'im 'ome. I take no interest in it

all. They tell us it's only a wretched poacher or a petty larcery we'll get in St. Marvells. My poor Noah ain't never likely to have the chance of a horrid murder in a place what returns a Conservative. My joint's burning.

[*Kneeling to look into the oven.*]

BLORE. But, 'Annah, suppose this case you've got 'old of now is a case what'll shake old England to its basis! Suppose it means columns in the paper with Topping's name a-figurin'! Suppose as family readin', it 'old its own with divorce cases!

HANNAH. Hullo! You know something about this arrest, you do!

BLORE. No, no, I don't! I merely said suppose. I merely wish to encourage you, 'Annah; to implant an 'ope that crime may brighten your wedded life.

HANNAH. [*Sitting at the table and referring to an official book.*] The man was found trespassing in the Deanery Stables with intent—refuses to give his name or any account of 'isself.

BLORE. [*To himself.*] If I could honly find hout whether Dandy Dick had any of the medicine it would so guide me at the Races. What am I to do? It doesn't appear that the 'orse in the stables—took it, does it?

HANNAH. [*Looking up sharply.*] Took what?

BLORE. He—took fright. You're sure there's no confession of any sort, 'Annah dear?

[*As he is bending over HANNAH, NOAH TOPPING appears. NOAH is a dense-looking ugly countryman, with red hair, a bristling beard, and a vindictive leer. He is dressed, in ill-fitting clothes, as a rural police constable.*]

NOAH. [*Fiercely.*] 'Annah!

HANNAH. [*Starting and replacing the book.*] Oh don't! This is Mr. Blore from the Deanery come to see us—an old friend o' mine!

[*BLORE advances to NOAH with a nervous smile, extending his hand.*]

NOAH. [*Taking BLORE's hand and holding it firmly.*] A friend of hern is a friend o' mian!

BLORE. I 'ope so, Mr. Topping. I thank you.

NOAH. She's gettin' me a lot o' nice 'nno friends this week, since we coom to St. Marvells.

BLORE. Of course, dear 'Annah was a lovin' favourite with heverybody.

NOAH. Ay. Well then, as her friends be mian, I'm takin' the liberty, one by one, of gradually droppin' on 'em all!

BLORE. [*Getting his hand away.*] Dear me!

NOAH. And if I catch any old fly a buzzin' round my lady I'll venture to break his 'ead in wi' my staff!

HANNAH. Oh, Noah!

BLORE. [*Preparing to depart.*] I—I merely called to know if hanything had been found hout about the ruffian took in our stables last night!

NOAH. Is that your business?

BLORE. It—it's my master's business.

NOAH. He's the De-an, ain't he?

HANNAH. Yes, Noah, of course.

NOAH. [*Fiercely.*] Shut oop, darlin'. Very well then—give Mr. Topping's respects to the Dean, and say I'll run up to the Deanery and see him after I've took my man over to Durnstone.

BLORE. Thank you—I 'ope the Dean will be at 'ome. Good day, 'Annah! Good day, Mr. Topping.

[*Offering his hand, into which NOAH significantly places his truncheon. BLORE goes out quickly.*]

HANNAH. [*Whimpering.*] Oh, Noah, Noah, I don't believe as we shall ever get a large circle of friends round us!

NOAH. Now then! [*Selecting a pair of hand-cuffs and examining them critically.*] Them'll do. [*Slipping them into his pocket, and turning upon HANNAH suddenly.*] 'Annah!

HANNAH. Yes, Noarhy—

NOAH. Brighten oop, my darlin', the little time you 'ave me at 'ome with you.

HANNAH. Yes, Noarhy.

[*She bustles about and begins to lay the cloth.*]

NOAH. I'm just a' goin' round to the stable to put old Nick in the cart.

HANNAH. Oh, don'tee trust to Nick, Noah dear—he's such a vicious brute. Kitty's safer in the cart.

NOAH. Shut oop, darlin'. Nick can take me on to the edge o' the hill in half the time.

HANNAH. The hill!

NOAH. Ah, what d'yee think I've put off taking my man to Durnstone to now for? Why, I'm a goin' to get a glimpse of the racin', on my way over. [*Opening the wicket in the cell door and looking in.*] There he is! Sulky! [*To HANNAH.*] Hopen the hoven door, 'Annah, and let the smell of the cookin' get into him.

HANNAH. Oh, no, Noah—it's torture!

NOAH. Do as I tell'ee. [*She opens the oven door.*] Torture! Of course it's torture! That's my rule! Whenever I got a 'old of a darned obstinate creature wot won't reveal his hindinty I opens the hoven door.

[*He goes out into the street, and as he departs, the awful face of THE DEAN appears at the wicket, his head being still enveloped in the fur cap.*]

HANNAH. [*Shutting the oven door.*] Not me! Torturing prisoners might a' done for them Middling Ages what Noah's always clattering about, but not for my time o' life. I'll shut that wicket. [*Crossing close to the wicket, her face almost comes against THE DEAN'S. She gives a cry.*] The Dean!

THE DEAN. Oh!

[*He disappears.*]

HANNAH. Oh, no! Not my old master! Never the master! [*Tottering to the wicket and looking in.*] Master! Look at me! It's 'Annah, your poor faithful servant, 'Annah!

[*The face of THE DEAN re-appears.*]

THE DEAN. [*In a deep 'sad voice.*] Hannah Evans.

HANNAH. It's 'Annah Topping, Knee Evans, wife o' the constable what's goin' to take you to cruel Durnstone. [*Sinking weeping upon the ground at the door.*] Oh, Mr. Dean, sir, what have you been up to? What have you been up to? What have you been up to?

THE DEAN. Woman, I am the victim of a misfortune only partially merited.

HANNAH. [*On her knees, clasping her hands.*] Tell me what you've done, Master dear; give it a name, for the love of goodness.

THE DEAN. My poor Hannah, I fear I have placed myself in an equivocal position.

HANNAH. [*With a shriek of despair.*] Ah!

THE DEAN. Be quiet, woman!

HANNAH. Is it a change o' cooking that's brought you to such ways? I cooked for you 'for seven 'appy years!

THE DEAN. [*Sniffing.*] Alas! you seem to have lost none of your culinary skill.

HANNAH. Master, are you hungry?

THE DEAN. I am sorely tried by your domestic preparations.

HANNAH. [*With clenched hands and a determined look.*] Oh! [*Quickly locking and bolting the street-door.*] Noah can't put that brute of a horse to under ten minutes. The dupplikit key o' the Strong Box! [*Producing a large key, with which she unlocks the cell-door.*] Master, you'll give me your patrol not to cut, won't you?

THE DEAN. Under any other circumstances, Hannah, I should resent that insinuation.

HANNAH. Don't resent nothing! Shove! Shove your hardest, Dean dear!

[*Pulling the door which opens sufficiently to let out THE DEAN.*]

THE DEAN. [*As he enters the room.*] Good day, Hannah; you have bettered yourself, I hope?

HANNAH. [*Hysterically flinging herself upon THE DEAN.*] Oh, Master, Master!

THE DEAN. [*Putting her from him sternly.*] Hannah! Mrs. Topping!

HANNAH. Oh, I know, I know, but crime levels all, dear sir!

THE DEAN. You appear to misapprehend the precise degree of criminality which attaches to me, Mrs. Topping. In the eyes of that majestic, but imperfect instrument, the law, I am an innocent if not an injured man.

HANNAH. Ah, stick to that, sir! Stick to it, if you think it's likely to serve your wicked ends!

[*Placing bread with other things on the table.*]

THE DEAN. My good woman, a single word from me to those at the Deanery, would instantly restore me to home, family, and accustomed diet.

HANNAH. Ah, they all tell that tale what comes here. Why don't you send word, Dean, dear?

THE DEAN. Because it would involve revelations of my temporary moral aberration!

HANNAH. [*Putting her apron to her eyes with a howl.*] Ow! Ow!

THE DEAN. Because I should return to the Deanery with my dignity—that priceless possession of man's middle age!—with my dignity seriously impaired!

HANNAH. Oh don't, sir, don't!

THE DEAN. How could I face my simple children who have hitherto, not unreasonably, regarded me as faultless? How could I again walk erect in the streets of St. Marvells with my name blazoned on the records of a police station of the very humblest description?

[*Sinking into a chair, and snatching up a piece of bread, which he begins munching.*]

HANNAH. [*Wiping her eyes.*] Oh, sir, it's a treat to hear you, compared with the ordinary criminal class. But, Master, dear, though my Noah don't recognise you—through his being a stranger to St. Marvells—how'll you fare when you get to Durnstone?

THE DEAN. I have one great buoyant hope—that a word in the ear of the Durnstone Superintendent will send me forth an unquestioned man. You and he will be the sole keepers of my precious secret. May its possession be a lasting comfort to you both.

HANNAH. Master, is what you've told me your only chance of getting off unknown?

THE DEAN. It is the sole remaining chance of averting a calamity of almost national importance.

HANNAH. Then you're as done as that joint is, my oven!

THE DEAN. Woman!

HANNAH. The Superintendent at Durnstone—John Ruggles—also the two Inspectors, Whitaker and Parker—

THE DEAN. Well!

HANNAH. Them and their wives and families are chapel folk.

THE DEAN. [*Aghast.*] No!

HANNAH. Yes. [*The DEAN totters across to a chair, into which he sinks with his head upon the table.*] Master! Listen!

THE DEAN. It's all over! It's all over!

HANNAH. No, no—Listen! I was well fed and kept seven years at the Deanery—I've been wed to Noah Topping eight weeks—that's six years and ten months' lovin' duty doo, to you and yours before I owe nothing to my darling Noah. Master dear, you sha'n't be took to Durnstone!

THE DEAN. Silence! Hannah Topping, formerly Evans, it is my duty to inform you that your reasoning does more credit to your heart than to your head.

HANNAH. I can't help that. The devil's always in a woman's heart because it's the warmest place to get to! [*Taking a small key from the table drawer.*] Here, take that! [*Pushing the key into the pocket of his coat.*] When you once get free

from my darling Noah that key unlocks your handcuffs!

THE DEAN. Handcuffs!

HANNAH. How are you to get free, that's the question now, isn't it? I'll tell you. My Noah drives you over to Durnstone with old Nick in the cart.

THE DEAN. Old Nick!

HANNAH. That's the horse. Now Nick was formerly in the Durnstone Fire Brigade, and when he hears the familiar signal of a double whistle you can't hold him in. There's the whistle. [*Putting it into THE DEAN's pocket.*] Directly you turn into Pear Tree Lane, blow once and you'll see Noah with his nose in the air, pullin' fit to wrench his 'ands off. Jump out—roll clear of the wheel—keep cool and 'opeful and blow again. Before you can get the mud out of your eyes Noah and the horse and cart will be well into Durnstone, and may Providence restore a young 'usband safe to his dootin' wife!

THE DEAN. Hannah! How dare you!

[*Recoiling horror-stricken.*]

HANNAH. [*Crying.*] Oh—ooh—ooh!

THE DEAN. Is this the fruit of your seven years constant cookery at the Deanery?

HANNAH. Oh dear! I wouldn't have done it, only this is your first offence!

THE DEAN. My first offence, oh!

HANNAH. You're not too old; I want to give you another start in life!

THE DEAN. Another start! Woman, do you think I've no conscience? Do you think I don't realise the enormity of the—of the difficulties in alighting from a vehicle in rapid motion?

HANNAH. [*Opening the oven and taking out a small joint in a baking tin, which she places on the table.*] It's 'unger what makes you feel conscientious!

THE DEAN. [*Waving her away.*] I have done with you!

HANNAH. With me, sir—but not with the joint! You'll feel wicked when you've had a little nourishment. [*He looks hungrily at the dish.*] That's right, Dean, dear—taste my darling Noah's favourite dish.

THE DEAN. [*Advancing towards the table.*] Oh, Hannah Topping—Hannah Topping! [*Clutching the carving-knife despairingly.*] I'll have no more women cooks at the Deanery! This reads me a lesson. [*Sitting and carving with desperation.*]

HANNAH. Don't stint yourself, sir. You can't blow that whistle on an empty frame. [*THE DEAN begins to eat.*] Don't my cooking carry you back, sir? Oh, say it do!

THE DEAN. Ah, if every mouthful would carry me back one little hour I would finish this joint!

[*NOAH TOPPING, unperceived by HANNAH and*

THE DEAN, *climbs in by the window, his eyes bolting with rage—he glares round the room, taking in everything at a glance.*

NOAH. [*Under his breath*] My man o' mystery—a waited on by my nooly made wife—a heating o' my favourite meal.

[*Touching HANNAH on the arm, she turns and faces him, speechless with fright.*]

THE DEAN. [*Still eating.*] If my mind were calmer this would be an all-sufficient repast. [*HANNAH tries to speak, then clasps her hands and sinks on her knees to NOAH.*] Hannah, a little plain cold water in a simple tumbler, please.

NOAH. [*Grimly—folding his arms.*] 'Annah, hintrodooce me!

[*HANNAH gives a cry and clings to NOAH's legs.*]

THE DEAN. [*Calmly to NOAH.*] Am I to gather, constable, from your respective attitudes that you object to these little kindnesses extended to me by your worthy wife?

NOAH. I'm wishin' to know the name o' my worthy wife's friend. A friend o' hern is a friend o' mian.

HANNAH. Noahry! Noahry!

NOAH. She's gettin' me a lot o' nice noo friends since we coom to St. Marvells.

HANNAH. Noahry! I made this gentleman's acquaintance through the wicket, in a casual way.

NOAH. Ay. Cooks and railin's—cooks and railin's! I might a guessed my wedded life 'ud a coom to this.

HANNAH. He spoke to me just as a strange gentleman ought to speak to a lady! Didn't you, sir—didn't you?

THE DEAN. Hannah, do not let us even under these circumstances prevaricate; such is not quite the case!

[*NOAH advances savagely to THE DEAN. There is a knocking at the door. NOAH restrains himself and faces THE DEAN.*]

NOAH. Noa, this is neither the toime nor place, wi' people at the door and dinner on t' table, to spill a strange man's blood.

THE DEAN. I trust that your self-respect as an officer of the law will avert anything so unseemly.

NOAH. Ay. That's it! You've touched me on my point o' pride. There ain't another police-station in all Durnstone conducted more strict and rigid nor what mian is, and it shall so continue. You and me is a goin' to set out for Durnstone, and when the charges nowstandin' agen you is entered, it's I, Noah Topping, what'll hadd another!

[*There is another knock at the door.*]

HANNAH. Noah!

NOAH. The charge of allynating the affections o' my wife, 'Annah!

THE DEAN. [*Horried.*] No, no!

NOAH. Ay, and worse—the embezzlin' o' my mid-day meal prepared by her 'ands. [*Points into the cell.*] Go in; you 'ave five minutes more in the 'ome you 'ave ruined and laid waste.

THE DEAN. [*Going to the door and turning to NOAH.*] You will at least receive my earnest

assurance that this worthy woman is extremely innocent?

NOAH. Hinnocent? [*Points to the joint on the table.*] Look theer! [*THE DEAN, much overcome, disappears through the cell door, which NOAH closes and locks. The knock at the door is repeated. To HANNAH, pointing to the outer door.*] Hunlock that door!

HANNAH. [*Weeping.*] Oh, Noahry, you'll never be popular in St. Marvells.

NOAH. Hunlock that door!

[*HANNAH unlocks the door, and admits GEORGIANA and SIR TRISTRAM, both dressed for the race-course.*]

GEORGIANA. Dear me! Is this the police-station?

HANNAH. Yes, lady. Take a chair, lady, 'near the fire. [*To SIR TRISTRAM.*] Sit down, sir.

GEORGIANA. This is my first visit to a police-station, my good woman; I hope it will be the last.

HANNAH. Oh, don't say that, ma'am. We're honly hauxiliary 'ere, ma'am—the Bench sets at Durnstone.

GEORGIANA. I must say you try to make everybody feel at home. [*HANNAH curtseys.*]

SIR TRISTRAM. It's beautifully Arcadian.

GEORGIANA. [*To HANNAH.*] Perhaps this is only a police-station for the young?

HANNAH. No, ma'am, we take ladies and gentlemen like yourselves.

NOAH. [*Who has not been noticed, surveying GEORGIANA and SIR TRISTRAM, gloomily.*] 'Annah, hintrodooce me.

GEORGIANA. [*Facing Noah.*] Good gracious! What's that! Oh, good morning.

NOAH. 'Annah's a gettin' me a lot o' nice noo friends this week since we coom to St. Marvells.

HANNAH. Noah, Noah—the lady and gentleman is strange.

NOAH. Ho!

GEORGIANA. Are you the man in charge here?

NOAH. Ay; are you seeing me on business or pleasure?

SIR TRISTRAM. Do you imagine people come here to see you?

NOAH. Noa—they generally coom to see my wife. 'Owver, if it's business [*pointing to the other side of the room*] that's the official side—this is domestic. You'll hall kindly move over.

SIR TRISTRAM and GEORGIANA. Oh, certainly.

[*Changing their seats.*]

SIR TRISTRAM. Now, look here, my man. This lady is Mrs. Tidman. Mrs. Tidman is the sister of Dr. Jedd, the Dean of St. Marvells.

HANNAH. [*With a gasp.*] Oh!

GEORGIANA. There's something wrong with your wife.

NOAH. Ay. She's proffigate—proceedins' are pendin'!

GEORGIANA. [*To SIR TRISTRAM.*] Strange police-station! My flesh creeps.

SIR TRISTRAM. [To NOAH.] Well, my good man, to come to the point. My poor friend and this lady's brother, Dr. Jedd, the Dean, you know—has mysteriously and unaccountably disappeared.

• GEORGIANA. Vanished.

SIR TRISTRAM. Gone.

NOAH. Absconded.

GEORGIANA. Absconded! How dare you!

NOAH. Respectable man was 'e?

GEORGIANA. What do you mean?

SIR TRISTRAM. This lady is his sister!

NOAH. Now, look 'ere—it's no good a gettin' 'asty and irritable with the law. I'll coom over to yer, officially.

[Putting the baking tin under his arm he crosses over to SIR TRISTRAM and GEORGIANA.]

SIR TRISTRAM. [Putting his handkerchief to his face.] Don't bring that horrible odour of cooking over here.

GEORGIANA. Take it away! What is it?

NOAH. It's evidence against my prodigal wife.

[SIR TRISTRAM and GEORGIANA exchange looks of impatience.]

GEORGIANA. Do you realise that my poor brother the Dean is missing?

NOAH. Ay. Touchin' this missin' De-an.

GEORGIANA. I left him last night to retire to rest.

SIR TRISTRAM. This morning he is not to be found!

NOAH. Ay. 'As it strack you to look in 'is bed?

GEORGIANA and SIR TRISTRAM. Of course!

GEORGIANA. Everybody did that!

NOAH. One 'ud a done. It's only confusin'—hall doin' it! Money matters right or wrong?

[GEORGIANA puts her handkerchief to her eyes.]

SIR TRISTRAM. Do put your questions more feelingly! This is his sister—I am his friend!

NOAH. You will push yourselves forrard. Had he anything on his mind?

GEORGIANA. Yes!

NOAH. Then I've got a the'ry.

SIR TRISTRAM and GEORGIANA. What is it?

NOAH. A the'ry that will put you all out o' suspense!

GEORGIANA and SIR TRISTRAM. Yes, yes!

NOAH. I've been a good bit about, I read a deal, and I'm a shrewd, experienced man. I should say this is nothin' but a hordinary case of socicide.

[GEORGIANA sits faintly.]

*SIR TRISTRAM. [Savagely to NOAH.] Get out of the way! Georgiam!

GEORGIANA. Oh Tris, if this were true how could we break it to the girls?

NOAH. I could run oop, durid' the evenin', and break it to the girls.

SIR TRISTRAM. [Turns upon NOAH.] Look here, all you've got to do is to hold your tongue and take down my description of the dean and report his disappearance at Durnstone. [Pushing him

into a chair.] Go on! [Dictating.] "Missing. The Very Reverend Augustin Jedd, Dean of St. Marvells." Poor Gus! Poor Gus!

HANNAH. [Softly to GEORGIANA.] Lady, lady!

[NOAH prepares to write, depositing the baking-tin on the table.]

GEORGIANA. [Turning.] Eh?

HANNAH. Hush! Listen to me!

[Speaks to GEORGIANA excitedly.]

SIR TRISTRAM. [To NOAH.] Have you got that?

NOAH. [Writing laboriously with his legs curled round the chair and his head on the table.] Ay. I'm spelling it my own way.

SIR TRISTRAM. Poor dear old Gus! [Dictating.] "Description!"

NOAH. Oh noa!

SIR TRISTRAM. "Description!"

NOAH. I suppose he was jest the hordinary sort o' lookin' man.

SIR TRISTRAM. No, no! "Description!"

GEORGIANA. [Turning from HANNAH excitedly.] Description—a little, short, thin man, with black hair and a squint!

SIR TRISTRAM. [To GEORGIANA.] No, no, he isn't.

GEORGIANA. Yes, he is!

SIR TRISTRAM. Georgiana! What are you talking about?

GEORGIANA. I'm Gus's sister—I ought to know what he's like!

SIR TRISTRAM. Good heavens, Georgiana—your mind is not going?

GEORGIANA. [Clutching SIR TRISTRAM's arm and whispering in his ear, as she points to the cell door.] He's in there!

SIR TRISTRAM. Eh!

GEORGIANA. Gus is the villain found dosing Pandy Dick last night!

SIR TRISTRAM. [Falling back.] Oh! [HANNAH seizes SIR TRISTRAM and talks to him rapidly.] [To NOAH.] What have you written?

NOAH. I've written "Hanswers to the name o' Gus!"

GEORGIANA. [Snatching the paper from him.] It's not wanted. I've altered my mind. I'm too busy to bother about him this week.

NOAH. What! Hafter wasting my time?

GEORGIANA. Look here—you're the constable who took the man in the Deanery stables last night?

NOAH. Ay. [Looking out of the window.] There's my cart outside ready to take the scoundrel over to Durnstone.

GEORGIANA. I should like to see him.

NOAH. You can view him passin' out.

[He tucks the baking-tin under his arm and goes up to the cell door.]

GEORGIANA. [To herself.] Oh, Gus, Gus!

NOAH. [Unlocking the door.] I warn yer. 'E's a awful looking creature.

GEORGIANA. I can stand it; I love horrors!

[NOAH goes into the cell closing the door after him.]
Tris!

SIR TRISTRAM. Georgiana!

GEORGIANA. What was my brother's motive in bolusing Dandy last night?

SIR TRISTRAM. I can't think. The first thing to do is to get him out of this hole. This good woman has arranged for his escape.

GEORGIANA. But we can't trust to Gus rolling out of a flying dog-cart! Why, it's as much as I could do!

HANNAH. Oh, yes, lady, he'll do it. I've prewided for everything. Don't betray him to Noah! There's another—a awfuller charge hangin' over his reverend 'ead.

SIR TRISTRAM. Another charge!

GEORGIANA. Another! Oh Tris! To think my own stock should run vicious like this.

HANNAH. Hush, lady!

[NOAH comes out of the cell with THE DEAN, who is in handcuffs.]

GEORGIANA and SIR TRISTRAM. Oh!

THE DEAN. [Raising his eyes, sees SIR TRISTRAM and GEORGIANA, and recoils with a groan, sinking on to a chair.] Oh!

NOAH. Oop you get!

SIR TRISTRAM. No, no, stay! I am the owner of the horse stabled at the Deanery. I make no charge against this wretched person. [To THE DEAN.] Oh man, man!

THE DEAN. I was discovered administering to a suffering beast a simple remedy for chills. I am an unfortunate creature. Do with me what you will.

GEORGIANA. The analysis hasn't come home from the chemist's yet. Is this the truth?

THE DEAN. Yes.

SIR TRISTRAM. [To NOAH.] Release this man.

NOAH. Release him! He was found trespassin' in the stables of the la-ate De-an, who has committed suicide.

THE DEAN. Oh! I—

SIR TRISTRAM, GEORGIANA and HANNAH. Hush!

NOAH. The diseased De-an is the honly man wot can withdraw one charge—

THE DEAN. I—listen!

SIR TRISTRAM, GEORGIANA and HANNAH. Hush!

NOAH. And I'm the honly man wot can withdraw the other.

SIR TRISTRAM. You? Get out!

GEORGIANA. Get out!

NOAH. I charge this person unknown with allynating the affections o' my wife while I was puttin' my 'orse to. And I'm going to drive him over to Durnstone with the hevidence.

GEORGIANA. It isn't true.

HANNAH. Oh lady, lady, it's appearance what is against us.

NOAH. [Through the opening of the door.] Woa! Steady there! Get back!

GEORGIANA. [Whispering to THE DEAN.] I am

disappointed in you, Augustin. Have you got this wretched woman's whistle?

THE DEAN. Yes.

SIR TRISTRAM. [Softly to THE DEAN.] Oh Jedd, Jedd—and these are what you call Principles! Have you got the key of your handcuffs?

THE DEAN. Yes.

NOAH [Appearing in the doorway.] Time's oop. Coom on!

THE DEAN. May I say a few parting words in the home I have apparently wrecked?

NOAH. Say 'em and 'a done.

THE DEAN. In setting out upon a journey, the termination of which is problematical, I desire to attest that this erring constable is the husband of a wife from whom it is impossible to withhold respect, if not admiration.

NOAH. You 'ear 'im!

THE DEAN. As for my wretched self, the confession of my weaknesses must be reserved for another time—another place. [To GEORGIANA.] To you, whose privilege it is to shelter in the sanctity of the Deanery, I give this earnest admonition. Within an hour from this terrible moment, let the fire be lighted in the drawing room—let the missing man's warm bath be waiting for its master—a change of linen prepared. Withhold your judgments. Wait.

NOAH. This is none of your business. Coom on.

THE DEAN. I am ready!

[NOAH takes him by the arm and leads him out.]

GEORGIANA. Oh, what am I to think of my brother?

HANNAH. [Kneeling at GEORGIANA's feet.] Think! That he's the beautifullest, sweetest man in all Durnshire!

GEORGIANA. Woman!

HANNAH. It's I and my whistle and Nick the fire-brigade horse what'll bring him back to the Deanery safe and unharmed. Not a soul but we three'll ever know of his misfortune. [Listening.] Hark! They're off!

NOAH. [Outside.] Get oop, now! Get oop, old girl!

HANNAH. [With a cry.] Ah! [Rushing to the door and looking out.] He's done for!

GEORGIANA and SIR TRISTRAM. Done for!

HANNAH. The Dean can whistle himself blue! Noah's put Kitty in the cart and left old Nick at home.

By special permission of ARTHUR
W. PINERO, Esq. From "Dandy
Dick."

THE DEATH OF THE FLOWERS.

THE melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,
Of wailing winds, and naked woods, and meadows brown and sear.

Heap'd in the hollows of the grove, the wither'd
leaves lie dead ;

They rustle to the eddying gust and to the rabbit's
tread.

The robin and the wren are flown, and from the
shrubs the jay,

And from the wood-top calls the crow through all
the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that
lately sprang and stood

In brighter light, and softer airs, a beauteous sister-
hood ?

Alas ! they all are in their graves, the gentle race
of flowers

Are lying in their lowly beds with the fair and
good of ours.

The rain is falling where they lie, but the cold
November rain

Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones
again.

The wind-flower and the violet, they perished long
ago,

And the briar-rose and orchis died amid the summer
glow :

But on the hill the golden-rod, and the aster in the
wood,

And the yellow sunflower by the brook in autumn
beauty stood,

Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as
falls the plague on men,

And the brightness of their smile was gone from
upland, glade, and glen.

And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still
such days will come,

To call the squirrel and the bee from out their
winter home ;

When the sound of dropping nuts is heard, though
all the trees are still,

And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the
rill,

The south-wind searches for the flowers whose
fragrance late he bore,

And sighs to find them in the wood and by the
stream no more.

And then I think of one who in her youthful
beauty died,

The fair meek blossom that grew up and faded by
my side ;

In the cold moist earth we laid her, when the
forest cast the leaf,

And we wept that one so lovely should have a life
so brief ;

Yet not unmeet it was that one like that young
friend of ours,

So gentle and so beautiful, should perish with the
flowers.

W. C. BRYANT.

THE SICK STOCKRIDER

Hold hard, Ned ! Lift me down once more, and
lay me in the shade.

Old man, you've had your work cut out to guide
Both horses, and to hold me in the saddle when I
sway'd,

All through the hot, slow, sleepy, silent ride.

The dawn at "Moorabinda" was a mist rack dull
and dense,

The sunrise was a sullen, sluggish lamp ;

I was dozing in the gateway at Arbutnot's
bound'ry fence,

I was dreaming on the Limestone cattle camp.

We crossed the creek at Carricksford, and sharply
through the haze

And suddenly the sun shot flaming forth ;

To southward lay "Katāwa," with the sandpeaks
all ablaze,

And the flush'd fields of Glen Lomond lay to
north.

Now westward winds the bridle path that leads to
Lindisfarm,

And yonder looms the double-headed Bluff ;

From the far side of the first hill, when the skies
are clear and calm,

You can see Sylvester's woolshed fair enough.

Five miles we used to call it from our homestead
to the place

Where the big tree spans the roadway like an
arch ;

'Twas here we ran the dingo down that gave us
such a chase

Eight years ago—or was it nine ?—last March.

'Twas merry in the glowing morn, among the
gleaming grass,

To wander as we've wandered many a mile,

And blow the cool tobacco cloud, and watch the
white wreaths pass,

Sitting loosely in the saddle all the while.

'Twas merry 'mid the blackwoods, when we spied
the station roofs,

To wheel the wild scrub cattle at the yard,

With a running fire of stockwhips and a fiery run
of hoofs ;

Oh ! the hardest day was never then too hard !

Ay ! we had a glorious gallop after "Starlight"
and his gang,

When they bolted from Sylvester's on the flat ;

How the sun-dried reed-beds crackled, how the
flint-strewn ranges rang

To the strokes of "Mountaineer" and "Acrobat."

Hard behind them in the timber, harder still across
the heath,

Close beside them through the tea-tree scrub we
dash'd ;

And the golden-tinted fern-leaves, how they rustled
underneath !

And the honeysuckle osiers, how they crash'd !

We led the hunt throughout, Ned, on the chestnut
and the grey,
And the troopers were three hundred yards
behind,

While we emptied our six-shooters on the bush-
rangers at bay,

In the creek with stunted box tree for a blind!

There you grappled with the leader, man to man
and horse to horse,

And you roll'd together when the chestnut rear'd;
He blazed away and missed you in that shallow
watercourse—

A narrow shave—his powder singed your beard!

In these hours when life is ebbing, how those days
when life was young

Come back to us; how clearly I recall

Even the yarns Jack Hall invented, and the songs
Jem Roper sung!

And where are now Jem Roper and Jack Hall?

Ay! nearly all our comrades of the old colonial
school,

Our ancient boon companions, Ned, are gone;

Hard livers for the most part, somewhat reckless
as a rule,

It seems that you and I are left alone.

There was Hughes, who got in trouble through
that business with the cards,

It matters little what became of him;

But a steer ripp'd up MacPherson in the Cooraminta
yards,

And Sullivan was drown'd at Sink-or-swim;

And Mostyn—poor Frank Mostyn—died at last a
fearful wreck,

In "the horrors," at the Upper Wandinong,

And Carisbrooke, the rider, at the Horsefall broke
his neck,

Faith! the wonder was he saved his neck so
long!

Ah! those days and nights we squander'd at the
Logans' in the glen—

The Logans, man and wife, have long been dead.

Elsie's tallest girl seems taller than your little
Elsie then;

And Ethel is a woman grown and wed.

I've had my share of pastime, and I've done my
share of toil,

And life is short—the longest life a span;

I care not now to tarry for the corn or for the oil.
Or the wine that maketh glad the heart of man.

For good undone and gifts misspent and resolutions
vain,

'Tis somewhat late to trouble. This I know—

I should live the same life over, if I had to live
again;

And the chances are I go where most men go.

The deep blue skies wax dusky, and the tall green
trees grow dim,

The sward beneath me seems to heave and fall;
And sickly, smoky shadows through the sleepy
sunlight swim,

And on the very sun's face weave their pall.

Let me slumber in the hollow where the wattle
blossoms wave,

With never stone or rail to fence my bed;

Show the sturdy station children pull the bush
flowers on my grave,

I may chance to hear them romping overhead.

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.

By permission of the Author.

TICONDEROGA.

A LEGEND OF THE WEST HIGHLANDS.

THIS is the tale of the man

Who heard a word in the night

In the land of the heathery hills,

In the days of the feud and the fight.

By the sides of the rainy sea,

Where never a stranger came,

On the awful lips of the dead,

He heard the outlandish name.

It sang in his sleeping ears,

It hummed in his waking head:

The name—Ticonderoga,

The utterance of the dead.

I. THE SAYING OF THE NAME.

On the loch-sides of Appin,

When the mist blew from the sea,

A Stewart stood with a Cameron:

An angry man was he.

The blood beat in his ears,

The blood ran hot to his head,

The mist blew from the sea,

And there was the Cameron dead.

"O, what have I done to my friend,

O, what have I done to myself,

That he should be cold and dead,

And I in the danger of all?

Nothing but danger about me,

Danger behind and before,

Death at wait in the heather

In Appin and Mamore,

Hate at all of the ferries,

And death at each of the fords,

Camerons priming gunlocks

And Camerons sharpening swords."

But this was a man of counsel,

This was a man of a score,

There dwelt no pawkier Stewart

In Appin or Mamore.

He looked on the blowing mist,
 He looked on the awful dead,
 And there came a smile on his face
 And there slipped a thought in his head.

Out over cairn and moss,
 Out over scrog and scaur,
 He ran as runs the clansman
 That bears the cross of war.
 His heart beat in his body,
 His hair clove to his face,
 When he came at last in the gloaming
 To the dead man's brother's place.

*The east was white with the moon,
 The west with the sun was red,
 And there, in the house-doorway,
 Stood the brother of the dead.

"I have slain a man to my danger,
 I have slain a man to my death.
 I put my soul in your hands,"
 The panting Stewart saith.
 "I lay it bare in your hands,
 For I know your hands are leal;
 And be you my targe and bulwark
 From the bullet and the steel."
 Then up and spoke the Cameron,
 And gave him his hand again :
 "There shall never a man in Scotland
 Set faith in me in vain ;
 And whatever man you have slaughtered,
 Of whatever name or line,
 By my sword and yonder mountain,
 I make your quarrel mine.
 I bid you in to my fireside,
 I share with you house and hall ;
 It stands upon my honour
 To see you safe from all."

It fell in the time of midnight,
 When the fox barked in the den
 And the plaids were over the faces
 In all the houses of men,
 That as the living Cameron
 Lay sleepless on his bed,
 Out of the night and the other world,
 Came in to him the dead.

"My blood is on the heather,
 My bones are on the hill ;
 There is joy in the home of ravens
 That the young shall eat their fill.
 My blood is poured in the dust,
 My soul is spilled in the air ;
 And the man that has undone me
 Sleeps in my brother's care."

"I'm wae for your death, my brother,
 But if all of my house were dead,
 I couldnae withdraw the plighted hand,
 Nor break the word once said."

"O, what shall I say to our father,
 In the place to which I fare ?
 O, what shall I say to our mother,
 Who greets to see me there ?
 And to all the kindly Camerons
 That have lived and died long-syne—
 Is this the word you sent them,
 Fause-hearted brother mine ?"

"It's neither fear nor duty,
 It's neither quick nor dead
 Shall gar me withdraw the plighted hand,
 Or break the word once said."

Thrice in the time of midnight,
 When the fox barked in the den,
 And the plaids were over the faces
 In all the houses of men,
 Thrice as the living Cameron
 Lay sleepless on his bed,
 Out of the night and the other world
 Came in to him the dead,
 And cried to him for vengeance
 On the man that laid him low ;
 And thrice the living Cameron
 Told the dead Cameron, No.

"Thrice have you seen me, brother,
 But now shall see me no more,
 Till you meet your angry fathers
 Upon the farther shore.
 Thrice have I spoken, and now,
 Before the cock be heard,
 I take my leave for ever
 With the naming of a word.
 It shall sing in your sleeping ears,
 It shall hum in your waking head,
 The name—Ticonderoga,
 And the warning of the dead."

Now when the night was over
 And the time of people's fears,
 The Cameron walked abroad,
 And the word was in his ears.
 "Many a name I know,
 But never a name like this ;
 O, where shall I find a skilful man
 Shall tell me what it is ?"
 With many a man he counselled
 Of high and low degree,
 With the herdsman on the mountains
 And the fishers of the sea.
 And he came and went unwearied,
 And read the books of yore.
 And the runes that were written of old
 On stones upon the moor.
 And many a name he was told,
 But never the name of his fears—
 Never, in east or west,
 The name that rang in his ears :

Names of men and of clans ;
 Names for the grass and the tree,
 For the smallest tarn in the mountains,
 The smallest reef in the sea :
 Names for the high and low,
 The names of the craig and the "at ;
 But in all the land of Scotland,
 Never a name like that.

II. THE SEEKING OF THE NAME.

And now there was speech in the south,
 And a man of the south that was wise,
 A periwig'd lord of London,
 Called on the clans to rise.
 And the riders rode, and the summons
 Came to the western shore,
 To the land of the sea and the heather,
 To Appin and Mamore.
 It called on all to gather
 From every scrog and scaur,
 That loved their father's tartan
 And the ancient game of war.
 And down the watery valley
 And up the windy hill,
 Once more, as in the olden,
 The pipes were sounding shrill ;
 Again in highland sunshine
 The naked steel was bright ;
 And the lads, once more in tartan,
 Went forth again to fight.

"O, why should I dwell here
 With a weird upon my life,
 When the clansmen shout for battle
 And the war-swords clash in strife ?
 I cannae joy at feast
 I cannae sleep in bed,
 For the wonder of the word
 And the warning of the dead.
 It sings in my sleeping ears
 It hums in my waking head,
 The name—Tieonderoga,
 The utterance of the dead.
 Then up, and with the fighting men
 To march away from here,
 Till the cry of the great warpipe
 Shall drown it in my ear !"

Where flew King George's ensign
 The plaided soldiers went :
 They drew the sword in Germany,
 In Flanders pitched the tent.
 The bells of foreign cities
 Rang far across the plain :
 They passed the happy Rhine,
 They drank the rapid Main.
 Through Asiatic jungles
 The Tartans filed their way,
 And the neighing of the warpipes
 Struck terror in Cathay.

"Many a name have I heard," he thought,
 "In all the tongues of men,
 Full many a name both here and there,
 Many both now and then.
 When I was at home in my father's house
 In the land of the naked knee,
 Between the eagles that fly in the lift
 And the herrings that swim in the sea,
 And now that I am a captain-man
 With a braw cockade in my hat—
 Many a name have I heard," he thought,
 "But never a name like that."

III. THE PLACE OF THE NAME.

There fell a war in a woody place,
 Lay far across the sea,
 A war of the march in the mirk midnight
 And the shot from behind the tree,
 The shaven head and the painted face,
 The silent foot in the wood,
 In a land of a strange, outlandish tongue
 That was hard to be understood.

It fell about the gloaming
 The general stood with his staff,
 He stood and he looked east and west
 With little mind to laugh.
 "Far have I been and much have I seen,
 And kent both gain and loss,
 But here we have woods on every hand
 And a kittle water to cross.
 Far have I been and much have I seen,
 But never the beat of this ;
 And there's one must go down to that waterside
 To see how deep it is."

It fell in the dusk of the night
 When unco things betide,
 The skilful captain, the Cameron,
 Went down to that waterside.
 Canny and soft the captain went ;
 And a man of the woody land,
 With the shaven head and the painted face,
 Went down at his right hand.
 It fell in the quiet night,
 There was never a sound to ken ;
 But all of the woods to the right and the left
 Lay filled with the painted men.

"Far have I been and much have I seen,
 Both as a man and boy,
 But never have I set forth a foot
 On so perilous an employ." -
 It fell in the dusk of the night
 When unco things betide,
 That he was aware of a captain-man
 Drew near to the waterside.
 He was aware of his coming
 Down in the gloaming alone ;
 And he looked in the face of the man
 And lo ! the face was his own.

"This is my weird," he said,
 "And now I ken the worst:
 For many shall fall the morn,
 But I shall fall the first.
 O, you of the outland tongue,
 You of the painted face,
 This is the place of my death;
 Can you tell me the name of the place?"
 "Since the Frenchmen have been here
 They have called it Sault-Marie;
 But that is a name for priests,
 And not for you and me.
 It went by another word,"
 Quoth he of the shaven head:
 "It was called Ticonderoga
 In the days of the great dead."

And it fell on the morrow's morning,
 In the fiercest of the fight,
 That the Cameron bit the dust
 As he foretold at night;
 And far from the hills of heather,
 Far from the isles of the sea,
 He sleeps in the place of the name
 As it was doomed to be.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

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CROOKED ANSWERS.

(DEDICATED TO THE LAUREATE.)

The Lady Clara V. de V.
 Presents her very best regards
 To that misguided Alfred T.
 (With one of her enamell'd cards).
 Though uninclined to give offence,
 The Lady Clara begs to hint
 That Master Alfred's common sense
 Deserts him utterly in print.

The Lady Clara can but say,
 That always from the very first
 She snubb'd in her decisive way
 The hopes that silly Alfred nursed.
 The fondest words that ever fell
 From Lady Clara when they met,
 Were "How d'ye do? I hope you're well!"
 Or else "The weather's very wet."

To show a disregard for truth
 By penning scurrilous attacks,
 Appears to Lady C. in sooth
 Like stabbing folks behind their backs.
 The age of chivalry, she fears,
 Is gone for good, since noble dames,
 Who irritate low sonneteers
 Get pelted with improper names.

The Lady Clara cannot think
 What kind of pleasure can accrue
 From wasting paper, pens, and ink,
 On statements the reverse of true.
 If Master Launcelot, one fine day
 (Urged on by madness or by malt,)
 Destroyed himself—can Alfred say
 The Lady Clara was at fault?

Her Ladyship needs no advice
 How time and money should be spent,
 And can't pursue at any price
 The plan that Alfred T. has sent.
 She does not in the least object
 To let the "foolish yeoman" go,
 But wishes let him recollect—
 That he should move to Jericho.

HENRY S. LEIGH.

THE RIDING OF THE BATTLEMENTS.

SHE said, "I was not born to mope at home in
 loneliness;"—

The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

She said, "I was not born to mope at home in
 loneliness,

When the heart is throbbing sorest there is balsam
 in the forest,

There is balsam in the forest for its pain,"

Said the Lady Eleanora,

Said the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

She doffed her silks and pearls, and donned instead
 her hunting-gear,

The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

She doffed her silks and pearls, and donned instead
 her hunting-gear,

And, till Summertime was over, as a huntress and
 a rover

Did she couch upon the mountain and the
 plain,

She, the Lady Eleanora,

Noble Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Returning home agen, she viewed with scorn the
 tournaments—

The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Returning home agen, she viewed with scorn the
 tournaments;

She saw the morions cloven and the crowning
 chaplets woven,

And the sight awakened only the disdain

Of the Lady Eleanora,

Of the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

"My feeling towards Man is one of utter scornful-
 ness,"

Said the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne

"My feeling towards man is one of utter scornful-
 ness,

And he that would o'ercome it, let him ride around
the summit

Of my battlemented Castle by the Maine,"

Said the Lady Eleanora,

Said the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

So came a knight anon to ride around the
parapet,

For Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

So came a knight anon to ride around the
parapet,

Man and horse were hurled together o'er the crags
that beetled nether.

Said the Lady, "There, I fancy, they'll
remain!"

Said the Lady Eleanora,

Queenly Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!

Then came another knight to ride around the
parapet,

For Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Then came another knight to ride around the
parapet,

Man and horse fell down, asunder, o'er the crags
that beetled under,

Said the Lady, "They'll not leap the leap
again!"

Said the Lady Eleanora,

Lovely Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!

Came other knights anon to ride around the
parapet,

For Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Came other knights anon to ride around the
parapet,

Till six and thirty corpses of both mangled men and
horses

Had been sacrificed as victims at the fane

Of the Lady Eleanora,

Stately Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!

That woeful year was by, and Ritter none came
afterwards

To Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

That woeful year was by, and Ritter none came
afterwards;

The Castle's lonely bassecourt looked a wild o'er-
grown-with-grasscourt;

'Twas abandoned by the Ritters and their train

To the Lady Eleanora,

Haughty Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!

She clomb the silent wall, she gazed around her
sovrn-like,

The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!

She clomb the silent wall, she gazed around her
sovrn-like;

"And wherefore have departed all the Brave, the
Lion-hearted,

Who have left me here to play the Castellain?"

Said the Lady Eleanora,

Said the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

"And is it fled for aye, the palmy time of
Chivalry?"

Cried Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

"And is it fled for aye, the palmy time of
Chivalry?"

Sham light upon the cravens! May their corpses
gorge the ravens,

Since they tremble thus to wear a woman's
chain!"

Said the Lady Eleanora,

Said the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

The story reached at Gratz the gallant Margrave
Gondibert

Of Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

The story reached at Gratz the gallant Margrave
Gondibert.

Quoth he, "I trow the woman must be more or
less than human;

She is worth a little peaceable campaign,

Is the Lady Eleanora,

Is the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!"

He trained a horse to pace round narrow stones
laid merlonwise,

For Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

He trained a horse to pace round narrow stones
laid merlonwise,

"Good Grey! do thou thy duty, and this rocky-
bosomed beauty

Shall be taught that all the vauntings are in
vain

Of the Lady Eleanora,

Of the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!"

He left his castle-halls, he came to Lady Eleanor's,
The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

He left his castle-halls, he came to Lady Eleanor's,
"O, lady, best and fairest, here am I,—and, if

thou carest,

I will gallop round the parapet amain,

Noble Lady Eleanora,

Noble Lady Eleanora von Alleyne!"

She saw him spring to horse, that gallant Margrave
Gondibert,

The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

She saw him spring to horse, that gallant Margrave
Gondibert.

"O, bitter, bitter sorrow! I shall weep for this
to-morrow!

It were better that in battle he were slain,"

Said the Lady Eleanora,

Said the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Then rode he round and round the battlemented
parapet,

For Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Then rode he round and round the battlemented
parapet;

The Lady wept and trembled, and her paly face
resembled,

As she looked away, a lily wet with rain ;
 Hapless Lady Eleanora !
 Hapless Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !

So rode he round and round the battlemented
 parapet ;
 For Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !
 So rode he round and round the battlemented
 parapet,
 " Accurst be my ambition ! He but rideth to
 perdition,
 He but rideth to perdition without rein !"
 Wept the Lady Eleanora,
 Wept the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Yet rode he round and round the battlemented
 parapet,
 For Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.
 Yet rode he round and round the battlemented
 parapet.
 Meanwhile her terror shook her—yea, her breath
 well-nigh forsook her.
 Fire was burning in the bosom and the brain
 Of the Lady Eleanora,
 Of the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !

Then rode he round and off the battlemented
 parapet
 To Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.
 Then rode he round and off the battlemented
 parapet.
 " Now blessed be God for ever ! This is marvel-
 lous ! I never
 Cherished hope of laying eyes on thee agayne,"
 Cried the Lady Eleanora,
 Joyous Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

" The Man of Men thou art, for thou hast fairly
 conquered me,
 The Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !
 The Man of Men thou art, for thou hast fairly
 conquered me.
 I greet thee as my lover, and, ere many days be
 over,
 Thou shalt wed me, and be lord of my
 domain,"
 Said the Lady Eleanora,
 Said the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

Then bowed the graceful knight, the gallant Mar-
 grave Gondibert,
 To Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.
 Then bowed the graceful knight, the gallant Mar-
 grave Gondibert,
 And thus he answered boldly, " There be many who
 as boldly
 Will adventure an achievement they disdain,
 For the Lady Eleanora,
 For the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

" Mayest bide until they come, O stately Lady
 Eleanora !
 O, Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !

Mayest bide until they come, O stately Lady
 Eleanora !
 And thou and they may marry, but, for me, I
 must not tarry,
 I have won a wife already out of Spain,
 Virgin Lady Eleanora,
 Virgin Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !"

Thereon he rode away, the gallant Margrave
 Gondibert,
 From Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.
 Thereon he rode away, the gallant Margrave
 Gondibert,
 And long in shame and anguish did that haughty
 Lady languish,
 Did she languish without pity for her pain,
 She the Lady Eleanora,
 She the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.

And year went after year, and still in barren
 maidenhood,
 Lived Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.
 And wrinkled Eld crept on, and still her lot was
 maidenhood,
 And woe ! her end was tragic : she was changed,
 at length, by magic,
 To an ugly wooden image, they maintain ;
 She, the Lady Eleanora,
 She, the Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !

And now, before the gate, in sight of all, trans-
 mogrified,
 Stands Lady Eleanora von Alleyne.
 Before her castle-gate, in sight of all, trans-
 mogrified,
 And he that won't salute her must be fined in
 foaming pewter,
 If a boor—but, if a burgler, in champagne,
 For the Lady Eleanora,
 Wooden Lady Eleanora von Alleyne !

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

From the German of FRIEDRICH RUECKERT.

SONG.

Doest thou idly ask to hear
 At what gentle seasons
 Nymphs relent when lovers near
 Press the tend'rest reasons ?
 Ah ! they give their faith too oft
 To the careless wooer ;
 Maiden's hearts are always soft,
 Would that men's were truer.
 Woo the fair one when around
 Early birds are singing,
 When, o'er all the fragrant
 Early herbs are springing

When the brookside, bank, and grove,
 All with blossoms laden,
 Shine with beauty, breathe of love,
 Woo the timid maiden.

Woo her when, with rosy blush,
 Summer eve is sinking;
 When, on rills that softly gush,
 Stars are softly winking;
 When through boughs that knit the bower
 Moonlight gleams are stealing,
 Woo her, till the gentle hour
 Wake a gentler feeling.

Woo her when autumnal dyes
 Tinge the woody mountain,
 When the dropping foliage lies
 In the weedy fountain;
 Let the scene that tells how fast
 Youth is passing over
 Warn her, ere her bloom is past,
 To secure her lover.

Woo her when the north winds call
 At the lattice nightly;
 When, within the cheerful hall,
 Blaze the faggots brightly;
 While the wintry tempest round
 Sweeps the landscape hoary,
 Sweeter in her ear shall sound
 Love's delightful story.

W. C. BRYANT.

MARSTON MOOR.

To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the clarion's
 note is high!
 To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas, the big drum
 makes reply!
 Ere this hath Lucas marched, with his gallant
 cavaliers,
 And the bray of Rupert's trumpets grows fainter
 in our ears.
 To horse! to horse! Sir Nicholas! White Guy is
 at the door,
 And the raven whets his beak o'er the field of
 Marston Moor.

Up rose the Lady Alice, from her brief and broken
 prayer,
 And she brought a silken banner down the narrow
 turret-stair;
 They were the tears that those radiant eyes
 shed,
 And the bright word "Glory" in the gay
 ring thread;
 'Twas the smile which o'er those
 features ran,
 'Twas your lady's gift, unfurl it in the

"It shall flutter, noble wench, where the best and
 boldest ride
 'Midst the steel clad files of Skippon, the black
 dragons of Pride;
 The recreant heart of Fairfax shall feel a sicklier
 quail,
 And the rebel lips of Oliver give out a louder
 psalm,
 When they see my lady's gewgaw flaunt proudly
 on their wing,
 And hear her loyal soldiers shout, 'For God and
 for the King!'"

'Tis soon. The ranks are broken, along the royal
 line
 They fly, the braggarts of the court! the bullies of
 the Rhine!
 Stout Langdale's cheer is heard no more, and
 Astley's helm is down,
 And Rupert sheathes his rapier, with a curse and
 with a frown,
 And cold Newcastle mutters, as he follows in their
 flight,
 "The German bear had better far have supped in
 York to-night."

The knight is left alone, his steel-cap cleft in
 twain,
 His good buff jerkin crimsoned o'er with many a
 gory stain;
 Yet still he waves his banner, and cries amid the
 rout,
 "For Church and King, fair gentlemen! spur on,
 and fight it out!"
 And now he wards a Roundhead's pike, and now
 he hums a stave,
 And now he quotes a stage-play, and now he fells
 a knave.

God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! thou hast no
 thought of fear;
 God aid thee now, Sir Nicholas! for fearful odds
 are here!
 The rebels hem thee in, and at every cut and
 thrust,
 "Down, down," they cry, "with Belial! down with
 him to the dust."
 "I would," quoth grim old Oliver, "that Belial's
 trusty sword
 This day were doing battle for the Saints and for
 the Lord!"

The Lady Alice sits with her maidens in her
 bower,
 The grey-haired warder watches from the castle's
 topmost tower;
 "What news? what news, old Hubert?"—"The
 battle's lost and won;
 The royal troops are melting, like mists before the
 sun!"

And a wounded man approaches;—I'm blind, and cannot see,
Yet sure I am that sturdy step, my master's step
• must be!"

"I've brought thee back thy banner, wench, from as rude and red a fray,
As e'er was proof of soldiers' thew, or theme for minstrel's lay!

Here, Hubert, bring the silver bowl, and liquor quantum suff.

I'll make a shift to drain it yet, ere I part with boots and buff;—

Though a Guy through many a gaping wound is breathing forth his life,

And I come to thee a landless man, my fond and faithful wife!

"Sweet! we will fill our money-bags, and freight a ship for France,

And mourn in merry Paris for this poor land's mischance:

For if the worst befall me, why better axe and rope,

Than life with Lenthall for a king, and Peters for a pope!

Alas! alas! my gallant Guy!—curse on the crop-eared boor,

Who sent me with my standard, on foot from Marston Moor!"

W. M. PRAED.

HOW WE BEAT THE FAVOURITE.

A LAY OF THE LOANSHIRE HUNT CUP.

"Ay, squire," said Stevens, "they back him at evens;

The race is all over, bar shouting, they say;
The Clown ought to beat her; Dick Neville is sweeter

Than ever—he swears he can win all the way.

"A gentleman rider—well, I'm an outsider,
But if he's a gent, who the mischief's a jock?

You swells mostly blunder, Dick rides for the flunder,

He rides, too, like thunder—he sits like a rock.

"He calls 'hunted fairly' a horse that has barely
Been stripp'd for a trot within sight of the hounds,

A horse that at Warwick beat Birdlime and Yorick,

And gave Abdelkader at Aintree nine pounds.

"They say we have no test to warrant a protest;
Dick rides for a lord and stands in with a steward;

The light of their faces they show him—his case is
Prejudged and his verdict already secured.

"But none can outlast her, and few travel faster,
She strides in her work clean away from The Drag;

You hold her and sit her, she couldn't be fitter,
Whenever you hit her she'll spring like a stag.

"And p'rhaps the green jacket, at odds though they back it,

May fall, or there's no knowing what may turn up.

The mare is quite ready, sit still and ride steady,
•Keep cool; and I think you may just win the cup."

Dark-brown with tan muzzle, just stripped for the tussle,

Stood Iscult, arching her neck to the curb,
A lean back and fiery, strong quarters and wiry,
A loin rather light, but a shoulder superb.

Some parting injunction, bestowed with much unction,

I tried to recall, but forgot like a dunce,
When Reginald Murray, full tilt on White Surrey,
Came down in a hurry to start us at once.

"Keep back in the yellow! Come up on Othello!
Hold hard on the chestnut! Turn round on The Drag!

Keep back there on Spartan! Back you, sir, in tartan!

So, steady there, easy," and down went the flag.

We started, and Kerr made strong running on Mermaid,

Through furrows that led to the first stake-and-bound,

The crack, half extended, looked bloodlike and splendid,

Held wide on the right where the headland was sound.

I pulled hard to baffle her rush with the snaffle,
Before her two-thirds of the field got away,

All through the wet pasture where floods of the last year

Still loitered, they clotted my crimson with clay.

The fourth fence, a wattle, floored Monk and Blue-bottle;

The Drag came to grief at the blackthorn and ditch,

The rails toppled over Redoubt and Red Rover,
The lane stopped Lycurgus and Leices and Witch.

She passed like an arrow Kildare a Sparrow,

And Mantrap and Mermaid refused wall;

And Giles on The Greyling came pining,

And I was left sailing in front

I took them a burster, nor eased her nor nursed her

Until the Black Bullfinch led into the plough,
And through the strong bramble we bored with a scramble—

My cap was knocked off by the hazel-tree bough.

Where furrows looked lighter I drew the rein tighter—

Her dark chest all dappled with flakes of white foam,

Her flanks mud-bespattered, a weak rail she shattered—

We landed on turf with our heads turned for home.

Then crashed a low binder, and then close behind her

The sward to the strokes of the favourite shook ;

His rush roused her mettle, yet ever so little

She shortened her stride as we raced at the brook.

She rose when I hit her. I saw the stream glitter,

A wide scarlet nostril flashed close to my knee,
Between sky and water The Clown came and caught her,

The space that he cleared was a caution to see.

And forcing the running, discarding all cunning,

A length to the front went the rider in green ;

A long strip of stubble, and then the big double,

Two stiff flights of rails with a quickset between.

She raced at the rasper, I felt my knees grasp her,

I found my hands give to her strain on the bit,

She rose when The Clown did—our silks as we bounded

Brushed lightly, our stirrups clashed loud as we lit.

A rise steeply sloping, a fence with stone coping—

The last—we diverged round the base of the hill ;

His path was the nearer, his leap was the clearer,

I flogged up the straight, and he led sitting still.

She came to his quarter, and on still I brought her,

And up to his girth, to his breast-plate she drew ;

A short prayer from Neville just reached me, "The Devil,"

He muttered—locked level the hurdles we flew.

A hum of hoarse cheering, a dense crowd careering,

All sights seen obscurely, all shouts vaguely heard ;

"The green wins!" "The crimson!" The multi-

coloured swarms on,

Figures are blended and features are blurred.

"Who is her master!" "The green forges on!"

"Who will outlast her!" "The Clown or The Clown!"

"The green races with all the white faces,

outpaces, outstretches the brown.

On still past the gateway she strains in the straightway,

Still struggles, "The Clown by a short neck at most,"

He swerves, the green scourges, the stand rocks and surges,

And flashes, and verges, and flits the white post.

At last so ends the tussle,—I knew the tan muzzle

Was first, though the ring-men were yelling "Dend heat!"

A nose I could swear by, but Clarke said, "The mare by

A short head," And that's how the favourite was beat.

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.

By permission of the Author.

MY SONG OF THE NORTH WIND.

HANG thee, vile North-Easter :

Other things may be

Very bad to bear with,

Nothing equals thee.

Grin and grey North-Easter,

From each Essex bog,

From the Plaistow marshes,

Rolling London fog—

"Tired we are of summer "

Kingsley may declare,

I give the assertion

Contradiction bare ;

I, in bed, this morning

Felt thee, as I lay :

"There's a vile North-Easter

Out of doors to-day!"

Set the dust-clouds blowing

Till each face they strike

With the blacks is growing

Chimney-sweeper like.

Fill our rooms with smoke-gusts

From the chimney pipe,

Fill our eyes with water

That defies the wipe.

Through the draughty passage

Whistle loud and high,

Making door-and windows

Rattle, flap and fly ;

Hark, that vile North-Easter

Roaring up the vent,

Nipping soul and body,

Breeding discontent!

Squall my noisy children ;

Smoke, my parlour grate ;

Scold, my shrewish partner ;

I accept my fate.

All is quite in tune with

This North-Eastern blast ;

Who can look for comfort

Till this wind be past ?

If all goes contrary,
 Who can feel surprise
 With this rude North-Easter
 In his teeth and eyes?
 It blows much too often.
 Nine days out of ten,
 Yet we boast our climate,
 Like true Englishmen!
 In their soft South-Eastern
 Could I bask at ease.
 I'd let France and Naples
 Bully as they please,
 But while this North-Easter
 In one's teeth is hurled,
 Liberty seems just worth
 Nothing in the world.
 Come, as came our fathers
 Heralded by thee
 Blasting, blighting, burning
 Out of Normandie.
 Come and flay and skin us
 And dry up all our blood—
 All to have a Kingsley
 Swear it does him good!

THE GARRISON OF CAPE ANN.

From the hills of home forth looking, far beneath
 the tent-like span
 Of the sky, I see the white gleam of the headland
 of Cape Ann.
 Well I knew its coves and beaches to the ebb-tide
 glimmering down,
 And the white-walled hamlet children of its ancient
 fishing-town.
 Long has passed the summer morning, and its
 memory waxes old,
 When along yon breezy headlands with a pleasant
 friend I strolled.
 Ah! the autumn sun is shining, and the ocean
 wind blows cool,
 And the golden-rod and aster bloom around thy
 grave, Rantoul!
 With the memory of that morning by the summer
 sea I blend
 A wild and wondrous story, by the younger Mather
 penned,
 In that quaint *Magnalia Christi*, with all strange
 and marvellous things,
 Heaped up huge and undigested, like the chaos
 Ovid sings.
 Dear to me these far, faint glimpses of the dual
 life of old,
 Inward, grand with awe and reverence; outward,
 mean and coarse and cold;

Gleams of mystic beauty playing over dull and
 vulgar clay;
 Golden-threaded fancies weaving in a web of
 hoddenn grey.

The great eventful Present hides the Past; but
 through the din
 Of its loud life hints and echoes from the life
 behind steal in;
 And the lore of home and fireside, and the
 legendary rhyme,
 Make the task of duty lighter which the true man
 owes his time.

So, with something of the feeling which the
 Covenanters knew,
 When with pious chisel wandering Scotland's
 moorland graveyards through,
 From the graves of old traditions I part the black-
 berry-vines,
 Wipe the moss from off the head-stones, and
 retouch the faded lines.

* * * *

Where the sea-waves back and forward, hoarse
 with rolling pebbles, ran,
 The garrison-house stood watching on the grey
 rocks of Cape Ann;
 On its windy site uplifting gabled roof and
 palisade,
 And rough walls of unhewn timber with the
 moonlight overlaid.

On his slow round walked the sentry, south and
 eastward looking forth
 O'er a rude and broken coast-line, white with
 breakers stretching north,—
 Wood and rock and gleaming sand-drift, jagged
 capes, with bush and tree,
 Leaning inland from the smiting of the wild and
 gusty sea.

Before the deep-mouthed chimney, dimly lit by
 dying brands,
 Twenty soldiers sat and waited, with their muskets
 in their hands;
 On the rough-hewn oaken table the venison haunch
 was shared,
 And the pewter tankard circled slowly round fr
 beard to beard.

Long they sat and talked together,—talked
 wizards Satan-sold;
 Of all ghostly sights and noises,—signs and v
 manifold;
 Of the spectre-ship of Salem, with the deo fr
 her shrouds,
 Sailing sheer above the water in th
 morning clouds;

Of the marvellous valley hidden in
 Gloucester woods,
 Full of plants that love the sun
 warmer latitudes;

Where the Arctic birch is braided by the tropic's
flowery vines,
And the white magnolia-blossoms star the twilight
of the pines!

But their voices sank yet lower, sank to husky
tones of fear,
As they spake of present tokens of the powers of
evil near;
Of a spectral host defying stroke of steel and aim
of gun;
Never yet was ball to slay them in the mould of
mortals run!

Thrice, with plumes and flowing scalp-locks, from
the midnight wood they came,—
Thrice around the block-house marching, met, un-
harm'd, its volley'd flame;
Then, with mocking laugh and gesture, sunk in
earth or lost in air,
All the ghostly wonder vanished, and the moonlit
sands lay bare.

Midnight came; from out the forest moved a dusky
mass that soon
Grew to warriors, plumed and painted, grimly
marching in the moon.
"Ghosts or witches," said the captain, "thus I foil
the Evil One!"
And he rammed a silver button, from his doublet,
down his gun.

Once again the spectral horror moved the guarded
wall about;
Once again the levelled muskets through the
palisades flashed out,
With that deadly aim the squirrel on his tree-top
might not shun,
Nor the beach-bird seaward flying with his slant
wing to the sun.

Like the idle rain of summer sped the harmless
shower of lead.
With a laugh of fierce derision, once again the
phantoms fled;
Once again, without a shadow on the sands the
moonlight lay,
And the white smoke curling through it drifted
slowly down the bay!

"I preserve us!" said the captain; "never
mortal foes were there:
Have vanished with their leader, Prince and
warrior of the air!
Be your useless weapons; skill and prowess
avail;
do the devil's service wear their master's
fame!"

grew near to cock-crow, when again a
call
of weary soldiers watching round
wall:

And they looked to flint and priming, and they
longed for break of day;
But the captain closed his Bible: "Let us cease
from man, and pray!"

To the men who went before us, all the unseen
powers seemed near,
And their steadfast strength of courage struck its
roots in holy fear.
Every hand forsook the musket, every head was
bowed and bare,
Every stout knee pressed the flagstones, as the
captain led in prayer.

Ceased thereat the mystic marching of the spectres
round the wall,
But a sound abhorred, unearthly, smote the ears
and hearts of all,—
Howls of rage and shrieks of anguish! Never
after mortal man
Saw the ghostly leaguers marching round the
block-house of Cape Ann.

So to us who walk in summer through the cool and
sea-blown town,
From the childhood of its people comes the solemn
legend down.
Not in vain the ancient fiction, in whose moral
lives the youth
And the fitness and the freshness of an undecaying
truth.

Soon or late to all our dwellings come the spectres
of the mind,
Doubts and fears and dread forebodings, in the
darkness undefined;
Round us through the grim projections of the heart
and of the brain,
And our pride of strength is weakness, and the
cunning hand is vain.

In the dark we cry like children; and no answer
from on high
Breaks the crystal spheres of silence, and no white
wings downward fly;
But the heavenly help we pray for comes to faith,
and not to sight,
And our prayers themselves drive backward all the
spirits of the night!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

THE ADMIRAL GUARINOS.

[This is the ballad which Don Quixote and Sancho
Panza, when at Toboso, overheard a peasant singing, as
he was going to his work at daybreak.]

I.

The day of Roncesvalles was a dismal day for you,
Ye men of France, for there the lance of King
Charles was broke in two.

Ye well may curse that rueful field, for many a noble peer,
In fray or fight, the dust did bite, beneath
Bernardo's spear.

II.

There captured was Guarinos, King Charles's admiral;
Seven Moorish kings surrounded him, and seized him for their thrall;
Seven times, when all the chace was o'er, for Guarinos lots they cast;
Seven times Marlotes won the throw, and the knight was his at last.

III.

Much joy had then Marlotes, and his captive much did prize,
Above all the wealth of Araby, he was precious in his eyes.
Within his tent at evening he made the best of cheer,
And thus, the banquet done, he spake unto his prisoner.

IV.

"Now, for the sake of Alla, Lord Admiral Guarinos,
Be thou a Moslem, and much love shall ever rest between us.
Two daughters have I—all the day thy handmaid one shall be,
The other (and the fairer far) by night shall cherish thee.

V.

"The one shall be thy waiting-maid, thy weary feet to lave,
To scatter perfumes on thy head, and fetch thee garments brave;
The other—she the pretty—shall deck her bridal-bower,
And my field and my city they both shall be her dower.

VI.

"If more thou wishest, more I'll give—speak boldly what thy thought is."—
Thus earnestly and kindly to Guarinos said Marlotes;—
But not a moment did he take to ponder or to pause.
Thus clear and quick the answer of the Christian Captain was:

VII.

"Now, God forbid! Marlotes, and Mary, his dear mother,
That I should leave the faith of Christ, and bind me to another.

For women—I've one wife in France, and I'll wed no more in Spain;
I change not faith, I break not vow, for courtesy or gain."

VIII.

Wroth waxed King Marlotes, when thus he heard him say,
And all for ire commanded he should be led away;
Away unto the dungeon-keep, beneath its vault to lie,
With fetters bound in darkness deep, far off from sun and sky.

IX.

With iron bands they bound his hands. That sore unworthy plight
Might well express his helplessness, doomed never more to fight.
Again, from cincture down to knee, long bolts of iron he bore,
Which signified the knight should ride on charger never more.

X.

Three times alone, in all the year, it is the captive's doom,
To see God's daylight bright and clear, instead of dungeon-gloom;
Three times alone they bring him out, like Samson long ago,
Before the Moorish rabble-rout to be a sport and show.

XI.

On three high feasts they bring him forth, a spectacle to be,
The feast of Pasque, and the great day of the Nativity,
And on that morn, more solemn yet, when the maidens strip the bowers,
And gladden mosque and minaret with the first fruits of the flowers.

XII.

Days come and go of gloom and show. Seven year are come and gone,
And now doth fall the festival of the holy Bap John;
Christian and Moslem tilts and jousts, to g homage due;
And rushes on the paths to spread they for sulky Jew.

XIII.

Marlotes, in his joy and pride, a rear,
Below the Moorish knights must with the spear;

But 'tis so high up in the sky, albeit much they strain,
No Moorish lance so far may fly, Marlotes' prize to gain.

XIV.

Wroth waxed King Marlotes, when he beheld them fail.
The whisker trembled on his lip, and his cheek for ire was pale;
And heralds proclamation made, with trumpets, through the town,—
"Nor child shall suck, nor man shall eat, till the mark be tumbled down."

XV.

The cry of proclamation, and the trumpet's haughty sound,
Did send an echo to the vault where the admiral was bound.
"Now, help me, God!" the captive cries, "what means this din so loud?
O, Queen of Heaven! be vengeance given on these thy haters proud!"

XVI.

"O! is it that some Pagan gay doth Marlotes' daughter wed,
And that they bear my scorn'd fair in triumph to his bed?
Or is it that the day is come—one of the hateful three,
When they, with trumpet, life, and drum, make heathen game of me?"

XVII.

These words the jailer chanced to hear, and thus to him he said,
"These tabors, Lord, and trumpets clear, conduct no bride to bed;
Nor has the feast come round again, when he that has the right,
Commands thee forth, thou foe of Spain, to glad the people's sight."

XVIII.

"This is the joyful morning of John the Baptist's day,
When Moor and Christian feasts at home, each in his nation's way;
Now our King commands that none his banquet shall begin,
Till some knight, by strength or sleight, the spearman's prize do win."

XIX.

Spoke Guarinos, "O! soon each man shall be
Tried once again on my own gallant steed."

O! were I mounted as of old, and harnessed cap-a-pee,
Full soon Marlotes' prize I'd hold, whate'er its price may be.

XX.

"Give me my horse, mine old grey horse, so be he is not dead,
All gallantly caparisoned, with plate on breast and head,
And give the lance I brought from France, and if I win it not,
My life shall be the forfeiture—I'll yield it on the spot."

XXI.

The jailer wondered at his words. Thus to the knight said he,
"Seven weary years of chains and gloom have little humbled thee;
There's never a man in Spain, I trow, the like so well might bear;
An' if thou wilt, I with thy vow will to the King repair."

XXII.

The jailer put his mantle on, and came unto the King,
He found him sitting on the throne, within his listed ring;
Close to his ear he planted him, and the story did begin,
How bold Guarinos vaunted him the spearman's prize to win.

XXIII.

That, were he mounted but once more on his own gallant grey,
And armed with the lance he bore on the Roncesvalles' day,
What never Moorish knight could pierce, he would pierce it at a blow,
Or give with joy his life-blood fierce, at Marlotes' feet to flow.

XXIV.

Much marvelling, then said the King, "Bring Sir Guarinos forth,
And in the Grange go seek y^e for his grey steed of worth;
His arms are rusty on the wall—seven years have gone, I judge,
Since that strong horse has bent his force to be a carrion drudge."

XXV.

"Now this will be a sight indeed, to see the enfeebled lord
Essay to mount that ragged steed, and draw that rusty sword;

And for the vaunting of his phrase he well
deserves to die,
So, jailer, gird his harness on, and bring your
champion nigh."

XXVI.

They have girded on his shirt of mail, his cuisses
well they've clasped,
And they've barred the helm on his visage pale,
and his hand the lance hath grasped,
And they have caught the old grey horse, the
horse he loved of yore,
And he stands pawing at the gate—caparisoned
once more.

XXVII.

When the knight came out the Moors did shout,
and loudly laughed the King,
For the horse he pranced and capered, and
furiously did fling;
But Guarinos whispered in his ear, and looked into
his face,
Then stood the old charger like a lamb, with a
calm and gentle grace.

XXVIII.

Oh! lightly did Guarinos vault into the saddle-
tree,
And slowly riding down made halt before
Marlotes' knee;
Again the heathen laughed aloud—"All hail, sir
knight," quoth he,
"Now do thy best, thou champion proud. Thy
blood I look to see."

XXIX.

With that Guarinos, lance in rest, against the
scoffer rode,
Pierced at one thrust his envious breast, and down
his turban trode.
Now ride, now ride, Guarinos—nor lance nor
rowel spare—
Slay, slay, and gallop for thy life. The land of
France lies there.

From Lockhart's "Spanish Ballads."

KING CANUTE.

KING CANUTE was weary-hearted, he had reigned
for years a score;
Battling, struggling, pushing, fighting, killing
much, and robbing more;
And he thought upon his actions walking by the
wild sea-shore.

"Twixt the Chancellor and Bishop walk'd the
King with step sedate;
Chamberlains and Grooms came after, Silver-sticks
and Gold-sticks great;
Chaplains, Aides-de-Camp, and Pages, all the
officers of state.

Sliding after like his shadow, pausing when he
chose to pause,
If a frown his face contracted, straight the courtiers
dropp'd their jaws;
If to laughter he was minded, out they burst in
loud hee-haws.

But that day a something vex'd him, that was clear
to old and young;
Thrice his Grace had yawn'd at table when his
favourite gleeman sung—
Once the Queen would have consoled him, and he
bid her hold her tongue.

"Something ails my royal master," cried the
Keeper of the Seal;
"Sure, my Lord, it is the lampreys served at
dinner, or the veal;
Shall I call your Grace's doctor?" "Psha, it is
not *that* I feel.

"Tis the *heart*, and not the stomach, fool! that
doth my rest impair;
Can a king be great as I am, prithee, and yet know
no cure?
Oh! I'm sick, and tired, and weary." Some one
cried "The King's armchair!"

Then towards the lackeys turning, quick my Lord
the Keeper nodded;
Straight the king's great chair was brought him
by two footmen able-bodied;
Languidly he sunk into it, it was comfortably
wadded.

"Leading on my fierce companions," cried he,
"over storm and brine,
I have fought and I have conquer'd: where is glory
like to mine?"
Loudly all the courtiers echoed, "Where is glory
like to thine?"

"What avail me all my kingdoms? I am w'
now and old;
Those fair sons I have begotten long to:
dead and cold;
Would I were, and quiet buried undern¹⁰
silent mould.

"Oh, remorse! the writhing serpent at
tears and bites;
Horrid, horrid things I look on thou
all the lights,—
Ghosts of ghastly recollections troop
of nights.

"Cities burning, convents blazing, red with sacrilegious fires;
Mothers weeping, virgins screaming vainly to their slaughtered sires."—

"Such a tender conscience," cries the Bishop,
"every one admires.

"But for such unpleasant by-gones cease, my gracious Lord, to search;
They're forgotten and forgiven by our holy mother church.
Never, never doth she leave her benefactors in the lurch.

"Look, the land is crown'd with ministers whom your Grace's bounty raised;
Abbeys fill'd with holy men, where you and Heaven are daily praised;—
You, my Lord, to think of dying! on my honour I'm amazed."

"Nay, I feel," replied King Canute, "that my end is drawing near."

"Don't say so," exclaimed the courtiers (striving each to squeeze a tear);

"Sure your Grace is strong and lusty and will live this fifty year!"

"Live these fifty years!" the Bishop roar'd (with action made to suit);

"Are you mad, my good Lord Keeper, thus to speak of King Canute?"

Men have lived a thousand years, and sure his Majesty will do't.

"Adam, Enoch, Lamech, Canan, Mahaleel, Methuselah,
Lived nine hundred years apiece; and is not he as good as they?"

"Fervently," exclaimed the Keeper, "fervently I trust he may."

"He to die?" resumed the Bishop; "he, a mortal like to us?"

Death was not for him intended, though *communis omnibus*.

Keeper, you are irreligious for to talk and cavil thus.

With his wondrous skill in healing ne'er a doctor can compete;

Some lepers, if he touch them, start up clean on their feet;

Could raise the dead up did his Highness but it meet.

Once the Jewish Captain stop the sun on hill,

He slew the foeman, bid the silver melt still?

Could gracious Canute if it were his will.

"Might I stay the sun above us, good Sir Bishop," Canute cried,

"Could I bid the silver moon to pause upon her heavenly ride?"

If the moon obeys my orders, sure I can command the tide.

"Will the advancing waves obey me, Bishop, if I make the sign?"

Said the Bishop, bowing lowly, "Land and sea, my Lord, are thine."

Canute look'd toward the ocean, "Back," he said, "thou foaming brine!"

"From the sacred shore I stand on, I command thee to retreat,

Venture not, thou stormy rebel, to approach thy master's seat;

Ocean, be thou still, I bid thee, come not nearer to my feet."

But the angry ocean answered with a louder, deeper roar,

And the rapid waves drew nearer, falling sounding on the shore,—

Back the keeper and the Bishop, back the King and courtiers bore.

And he sternly bade them never more to kneel to human clay,

But alone to praise and worship that which earth and seas obey;

And his golden crown of empire never wore he from that day.

King Canute is dead and gone; Parasites exist alway.

W. M. THACKERAY.

A WOMAN'S STORY

O'er the gables of our dwelling
Swung the ivy night and day,
When the summer winds came breathing,
Where the swallows loved to play.

From the topmost windows gazing,
We could see the ships go by,
And their white sails seem suspended,
'Twixt the blue sea and the sky.

Sea-gulls on slow pinions floated
O'er them, when the days were fair;
Like the ghosts of souls departed,
Bound for a serener air.

Came fresh odours of the seaweed
O'er the sand-hills and the bent;
Mingling round about our homestead,
With the garden's softer scent.

Fair, I wis, the days went by me,
Free from shade of earthly care;
When I ruled my father's dwelling,
I, his daughter and his heir.

Never knew I mother's counsel,
 Ere my childhood she was dead ;
 Never felt I hands of blessing
 Waved above my infant head.
 Stern my father was, and sterner
 Grew when his great loss befell ;
 Yet my eyes were like my mother's,
 And he loved his daughter well,
 Scarcely had I play or playmate.
 Nature was a nurse to me ;
 And I loved our lonely mountains,
 And the thunder of the sea.
 All my joy was on the ocean,
 All my fancy for the foam,
 Mourn'd I for my hard condition,
 That a girl must bide at home.
 So I loved the sea, and sailors ;
 Joyful when my father came :
 " On the morrow greet your cousin,
 He who bears your mother's name."

Cousin Willie was a sailor ;
 Scarce a year the lad had been
 Cruising in the Channel squadron,
 For his country and his Queen,
 When a fever strong and direful
 Laid him on a bed of pain,
 And he sought a season's absence
 Ere he went a cruise again.
 Thus he came to sojourn with us,
 Our home softer breezes fann'd
 Than those sweeping o'er his dwelling,
 In the distant northern land.
 And he needed woman's tendance,
 Till the red blood coursed once more,
 In his fair cheek and his forehead ;
 And a grateful heart he bore
 For my nursing, saying, " Cousin,
 Fewer are my years than thine,
 Yet my heart has learnt to love thee :
 Will you, then, one day be mine ?"

Scarce an answer could I make him,
 For I loved the boy too well ;
 " Willie," said I, " pass a summer
 Must pass o'er you ere you tell
 Any maiden that you love her,
 Other faces far above ;
 This is gratitude, my cousin,
 And I will not name it love."
 Said he, with a boy's devotion,
 " Cousin, I have spoken truth.
 Can you blame me for my loving—
 Do you scorn me for my youth ?
 Lo ! now, love, makes all things equal,
 And, ah ! happy boon for me,
 I have now achieved my manhood,
 In that I have knelt to thee."
 " Be it so," I said, " my cousin,
 Though my heart misgives me sore.
 If you'd have me wed you, Willie,
 Ask me when you come once more."

Happy days and nights went over,
 Tender Willie was and true ;
 How I worshipp'd my boy lover,
 Scarcely in my heart I knew.
 Yet a fear was still before me
 For our future—years to him
 Would show many fairer faces,
 While my eyes were growing dim.
 Absence from my side might change him,
 And I vow'd I would not blame
 If he bow'd him to another,
 And I never bore his name.
 I would still enjoy the present,
 And the incense all too sweet
 To a woman, of man's worship
 And a lover at her feet.
 So the time went on, till Autumn
 Brought us to the fatal day.
 Willie kiss'd, and left me weeping,
 And I watch'd him sail away.

When my lover had departed,
 Sad I was and very lone,
 All the old familiar places
 Made me feel that he was gone.
 Pleasant pathways in the woodland
 Seem'd to breathe his words again ;
 And I heard his merry laughter
 In the ripples of the main.
 Many a strange and sad foreboding
 Had I, for the coming years.
 Thoughts of Willie grown inconstant,
 While my love grew with my fears.
 I was proud indeed to love him,
 So I told myself, and swore
 Time that changed him should not change me,
 I would love him evermore.
 Only one love in a lifetime
 Such as mine the heart can hold ;
 So I clung to love as closely
 As a miser hugs his gold.

Years roll'd on. And still the tidings
 Came from Willie far away ;
 While his country needed service,
 Still the boy was blithe to stay.
 And another fear had empire
 Ever, in my troubled breast ;
 Would he ne'er return to England.
 Unto loving hearts and rest ?
 I had wealth enough to dower him,
 Mistress of my father's land,
 If he'd rest beneath our mountains,
 And take all things from my hand
 Then at last the war was over,
 And my boy was coming back ;
 Saw I in my dreams the vessel,
 And the white foam in her tr
 They had landed—strange it t
 That my Willie should dep
 For his northern home, un
 That he pass'd an aching

Though his northern kindred claim'd him,
Yet he might have stay'd a space;
Turn'd aside one hour to see me,
Who had long'd so for his face.

He would come, he wrote, yet tarried,
Still, unheeding of my we; ;
Had he changed, and ceased to love me?
Surely I had right to know.

Days went by, a deeper sadness
Came upon me when I know
All my dream of love was ended,
And my Willie was not true.

By a woman's subtler instinct
I could read the heart of youth;
When my darling vow'd to love me—
Surely he believed it truth.

But the years had brought deliverance
From his fancy. Then there came
Stately letters from his mother,
Fain to save me from the shame.

Wrote she: "When my son in loving
Loved a noble heart like thine,
Surely I had made you welcome,
Here among these girls of mine.

I have look'd with gladness forward
Ever as a mother may,
To his resting here in England,
And his happy marriage-day.

Now a change has come. He lingers
Daily by a baby-face,
So I bid you here, Miss Raeburn,
That you may assert your place.

She is fair, but fairer honour
Is, and to his plighted bride
Son of mine should ne'er prove faithless,
I had rather that he died.

Will you come then to the Norland?
Summer to our hills has lent
Fresher beauty. Know our welcome."
So she ended, and I went.

On by many a waving woodland
Sped we, till the day grew dim;
Little reck'd I of the landscape—
For my thoughts were all of him.

Cold the moon look'd down from Heaven
On me, all that weary night,
Till she paled before the morning,
And I saw each mountain height
Own'd with crimson from the sunrise,
Fair as erst my hopes had been:
No whirl'd along a valley
Here amid its mosses green
A rivulet, its waters

gling; rose the fir trees tall
An ancient house, with turrets
castellated wall.

my remembrance faded
errand I had come;
went on to meet him—
ce was Willie's home!

Willie came; my boyish lover
Had to stalwart manhood grown;
But I saw his love had vanish'd—
I must walk the world alone.

Yet he spoke no word of changing,
And seem'd happy I was there—
Well I knew his heart had alter'd,
And I was no longer fair.
Earnestly his mother pleaded—

"See, Miss Raeburn, he is true;
Gone the shadow of dishonour,
And his heart flies back to you."
Spoke she, standing by the window:—

Where the streamlet's mimic whirl
Sparkled in the valley's centre
Willie stood; a fair young girl
Walk'd beside him. "Yonder," said I.
"She has gain'd him; be it so:
Sweeter lips than mine have won him,
Though I loved him—years ago."

Then I bade them bring the maiden
Willie loved, that I might see
How her fresher face had won him
From allegiance vow'd to me.
Could I wonder at his falsehood,
When she came, as fair and young
As a painter's bright ideal?

Never poet's rhyme has sung
Eyes of such entralling lustre,
Hair of such a glorious hue.
Long I look'd at her, nor wonder'd
That my Willie was not true.

Tearfully she stood beside me,
Vowing she had done me wrong,
"Ah! what right had I to rob you,
You who knew and loved him long?"
"Trust me for forgiveness," said I—
With her soft face on my breast,
"See you love him very dearly,
Willie's happiness is best."

Then I left them and I journey'd
Homeward to the southern sea;
Left the wealth of love behind me,
That my fate denied to me.
Tidings from the North thereafter
Came, from Willie's happy wife,
Saying he had found his haven,
And had left his sailor's life.
And I answer'd, words of greeting,
Asking one month of their year,
Would they visit olden places
That for Willie's sake were dear
Calmly I can wait their coming,
With no heart-throb at his look,
I have shut my soul from loving,
Closed it as a sealed book.

And I hold the poet's saying,
Although bitter tears it cost;
Better than a life that's loveless
Is it, to have Loved and Lost.

CHARLEMAGNE AND THE BRIDGE OF MOONBEAMS.

• ["Many traditions are extant of the fondness of Charlemagne for the neighbourhood of Langewinkel. Nay, it is firmly believed that his affection survived his death; and that even now, at certain seasons of the year, his spirit loves to wake from its slumber of ages, and revisit it still."—SNOW'S *Legends of the Rhine*, vol. ii.]

BEAUTEUS is it in the Summer-night, and calm
along the Rhine,
And like molten silver shines the light that sleeps
on wave and vine.

But a stately Figure standeth on the Silent Hill
alone,
Like the phantom of a Monarch looking vainly for
his throne!

Yes!—'tis he—the unforgotten Lord of this be-
loved land!

'Tis the glorious Carlus Magnus, with his gleamy
sword in hand,
And his crown entwreathed with myrtle, and his
golden sceptre bright,
And his rich imperial purple vesture floating on
the night!

Since he dwelled among his people stormy cen-
turies have rolled,
Thrones and kingdoms have departed, and the
world is waxing old:
Why leaveth he his house of rest? Why cometh
he once more
From his marble tomb to wander here by Langa-
winkel's shore?

O, fear ye not the Emperor!—he doth not leave
his tomb
As the herald of disaster to our land of blight and
bloom;
He cometh not with blight or ban on castle, field,
or shrine,
But with overflowing blessings for the Vineyards
of the Rhine!

As a bridge across the river lie the moonbeams all
the time,
They shine from Langawinkel unto ancient Ingel-
heim;

And along this Bridge of Moonbeams is the
Monarch seen to go,
And from thence he pours his blessings on the
royal flood below.

He blesses all the vineyards, he blesses vale and
plain,
The lakes and glades and orchards, and fields of
golden grain,
The lofty castle-turrets and the lowly cottage-
hearth;
He blesses all, for over all he reigned of yore on
earth;

Then to each and all so lovingly he waves a mute
Farewell,
And returns to slumber softly in his tomb at La
Chapelle,
Till the Summertime be come again, with sun, and
rain, and dew,
And the vineyards and the gardens woo him back
to them anew.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

• From the German of EMANUEL GEIBLER.

THE SHADOW ON THE WALL.

THERE is a shadow on the wall,
Which comes between my rest and me;
No sound upon mine ear doth fall,
There is no living form to see;
But there's the shadow in my way,
Which never leaves me, night or day.

I strive to shut it from my sight,
But conscience tells me it is there;
I kneel beside my bed at night—
Nor heart—nor tongue—can utter prayer,
For there's the shadow in my way,
Which will not let me sleep or pray.

I wander, listless, through the street,
I sit upon this lowly tomb:
There, many a well-known face I meet—
Here, all is solitude and gloom;
But there, and here, by night and day,
That shadow rises pale and grey.

It is *her* shadow that I see—
Her shadow! Oh, so young and fair!
She was too angel-pure for me,
My heart too black for her to share;
But yet I strove her love to win,
And striving, steep'd my soul in sin.
How many years! how many years!
(I dare not count them if I could)
Has the remembrance of her tears
Come up before me like a flood!
But ah! nor dove, nor brightening sky,
Brings peace or promise from on high.

• • • • •
We stood upon the river's edge,
He, she, and I—we three alone;
A lily blossom'd near the sedge,
The sunlight on its petals shone;
He forward stepped—the dazzling lip
The treach'rous sedge deceived his

He slipped and fell: he could not
And thus, entangled by the weed
Which grew all round and under
He snatched in vain the bend
Then deeper—deeper—deeper
While she stood helpless on

I might have rush'd into the flood—
 I'd breast'd many a deeper tide;
 I might have saved him if I would:
 Saved him—that *she* might be his bride!
 A demon whisper'd, passing by,
 "SHE MAY BE THINE, IF HE BUT DIE!"

I turn'd from her appealing eyes,
 But saw her shadow in the wave:
 With arms uplifted to the skies
 She call'd on Heaven and me to save:
 I heard her dismal, piercing cry,
 "Oh! do not leave him there to die!"

"I come to thee, beloved, I come—
 Since other aid has been denied—
 To save thee, or to share thy doom:
 Life is not life, but by thy side!
 Nay, let me leave this cheerless place:
 'Tis worse than death to miss *his* face!"

I know not how I drew her out,
 For I was madden'd by my grief;
 A moment more—I heard a shout,
 And others came to my relief.
 They bore her silently away,
 And left me in my mute dismay.

All night I linger'd near her door,
 While pale forms flitted to and fro.
 I question'd each one o'er and o'er,
 And met their looks of silent woe:
 Yes—*she* was dying—close to heaven,
 And I was living unforgiven!

Oh, how I long'd that voice to hear,
 If only for a moment's space!
 Though bitter words I well might fear,
 And scorn and hatred in her face.
 I thought 'twere better bear *that* pain,
 Than never look on her again.

When weary night withdrew her shroud,
 And careless grief left doors unlock'd,
 I stole amid the fearful crowd,
 That near the loved one's chamber flock'd:
 O how could I dare to stand among
 Use bleeding hearts—that stricken throng?

let me pass without a word,
 if unconscious I was there;
 'n me backward no one stirr'd;
 did not see, or did not care,
 and stood beside her bed—
 ' sorrows!—*she* was dead!

her shadow evermore,
 saw it in the wave;
 lifted to implore
 rescue from the grave;
 her mournful cry—
 've him there to die!"

It rings for ever in my ear,
 'Twill haunt me downward to the grave!
 Oh! welcome death!—if death be near—
 As freedom to the tortured slave—
 Welcome to me, as friend to friend,
 So let this weary struggle end.

But when I've left this world of strife—
 When all things earthly fade away—
 Will the dark shadow of my life
 Dissolve before the Eternal Day?
 That day whose light is bright as seven?
 NO SHADE OF SIN CAN ENTER HEAVEN.

Venetia.

MRS. WOFFINGTON'S PORTRAIT.

[Mabel Vane sees the supposed portrait of her rival, Mrs. Woffington, in Triplet's studio. The canvas has been cut, and the lady's face is seen in the aperture. Mabel appeals to what she believes the counterfeit presentment of the actress.]

At this moment, in spite of Triplet's precaution, Mrs. Vane, casting her eye accidentally round, caught sight of the picture, and instantly started up, crying: "She is there!" Triplet was thunder-struck. "What a likeness!" cried she, and moved towards the supposed picture.

"Don't go to it!" cried Triplet, aghast; "the colour is wet."

She stopped; but her eye, and her very soul, dwelt upon the supposed picture; and Triplet stood quaking. "How like! It seems to breathe. You are a great painter, sir. A glass is not truer."

Triplet, hardly knowing what he said, muttered something about "critics, and lights and shades."

"Then they are blind!" cried Mabel, never for a moment removing her eye from the object. "Tell me not of lights and shades. The pictures I see, have a look of paint; but yours look like life. Oh! that she were here, as this *wonderful* image of hers is. I would speak to her. I am not wise or learned; but orators never pleaded as I would plead to her for my Ernest's heart." Still her eye glanced upon the picture; and, I suppose, her heart realised an actual presence, though her judgment did not, for by some irresistible impulse she sank slowly down and stretched her clasped hands towards it, while sobs and words seemed to break direct from her bursting heart. "Oh, yes! you are beautiful, you are gifted, and the eyes of thousands wait upon your every word and look. What wonder that he, ardent, refined and genial, should lay his heart at your feet? And I have nothing but my love to make him love me. I cannot take him from you. Oh, be generous to the weak! oh, give him back to me! What is one heart more to you? You are so rich, and I am so

poor, that without his love I have nothing, and can do nothing but sit me down and cry till my heart breaks. Give him back to me, beautiful, terrible woman! for, with all your gifts, you cannot love him as his poor Mabel does; and I will love you longer perhaps than men can love. I will kiss your feet, and Heaven above will bless you; and I will bless you and pray for you to my dying day.. Ah! it is alive! I am frightened! I am frightened!" She ran to Triplet and seized his arm. "No!" cried she, quivering close to him; "I'm not frightened for it was for me she—Oh, Mrs. Woffington!" and hiding her face on Mr. Triplet's shoulder, she blushed, and wept, and trembled.

What was it had betrayed Mrs. Woffington? A tear!

During the whole of this interview (which had taken a turn so unlooked for by the listener) she might have said with Beatrice, "What fire is in mine ears?" and what self-reproach and chill mis-giving in her heart too. She had passed through a hundred emotions, as the young innocent wife told her sad and simple story. But anxious now above all things to escape without being recognised—for she had long repented having listened at all, or placed herself in her present position, she fiercely mastered her countenance; but though she ruled her features, she could not rule her heart. And when the young wife, instead of inveighing against her, came to her as a suppliant, with faith in her goodness, and sobbed to her for pity, a big tear rolled down her cheek, and proved her something more than a picture or an actress.

Mrs. Vane, as we have related, screamed and ran to Triplet.

Mrs. Woffington came instantly from her frame, and stood before them in a despairing attitude, with one hand upon her brow. For a single moment her impulse was to fly from the apartment, so ashamed was she of having listened, and of meeting her rival in this way; but she conquered this feeling, and as soon as she saw Mrs. Vane too had recovered some composure she said to Triplet, in a low but firm voice:

"Leave us, sir. No living creature must hear what I say to this lady!"

Triplet remonstrated, but Mrs. Vane said, faintly:

"O yes, good Mr. Triplet, I would rather you left me."

Triplet, full of misgivings, was obliged to retire.

"Be composed, ladies," said he, piteously. "Neither of you could help it;" and so he entered his inner room, where he sat and listened nervously, for he could not shake off all apprehension of a personal encounter.

In the room he had left, there was a long uneasy silence. Both ladies were greatly embarrassed. It was the actress who spoke first. All trace of emotion, except a certain pallor, was

driven from her face. She spoke with very marked courtesy, but in tones that seemed to freeze as they dropped one by one from her mouth.

"I trust, Madam, you will do me the justice to believe I did not know Mr. Vane was married?"

"I am sure of it!" said Mabel, warmly. "I feel you are as good as you are gifted."

"Mrs. Vane, I am not!" said the other, almost sternly. "You are deceived!"

"Then Heaven have mercy on me! No! I am not deceived, you pitied me. You speak coldly now; but I know your face and your heart—you pity me!"

"I do respect, admire, and pity you," said Mrs. Woffington, sadly; "and I could consent never more to communicate with you—with Mr. Vane."

"Ah!" cried Mabel; "Heaven will bless you! But will you give me back his heart?"

"How can I do that?" said Mrs. Woffington, uneasily; she had not bargained for this.

"The magnet can repel as well as attract. Can you not break your own spell? What will his presence be to me, if his heart remain behind?"

"You ask much of me."

"Alas! I do."

"But I could do even this." She paused for breath. "And perhaps if you, who have not only touched my heart, but won my respect, were to say to me 'Do so, I should do it.'" Again she paused, and spoke with difficulty; for the bitter struggle took away her breath. "Mr. Vane thinks better of me than I deserve. I have—only—to make him believe me—worthless—worse than I am—and he will drop me like an adder—and love you better, far better—for having known—admired—and despised Margaret Woffington."

"Oh!" cried Mabel, "I shall bless you an hour of my life." Her countenance brightened into rapture at the picture, and Mrs. Woffington darkened with bitterness as she watched her.

But Mabel reflected, "Rob you of your name?" said this pure creature. "Ah. Vane! you think but of yourself."

"I thank you, Madam," said Mrs. W. a little touched by this unexpected turn, "some one must suffer here, and—"

Mabel Vane interrupted her. "The cruel and base," said she, firmly, "forehead shall be soiled by me. Beauty is admired, talent is adored, is a woman's crown. With it, without it, the rich are poor, upright, and never hides it."

Her face was as the face of an actress, conquered by her actually bowed her head, and the hand of the country wife a few hours ago.

Faintly paid this homage, Mabel Vane hardly re-

to heaven, and her heart was gone there for help in a sore struggle.

"This would be to assassinate you; no less. And so, Madam," she sighed, "with God's help, I do refuse your offer; choosing rather, if needs be, to live desolate, but innocent—many a better than I hath lived so—ay! if God wills it, to die, with my hopes and my heart crushed, but my hands unstained; for so my humble life has passed."

How beautiful, great and pure goodness is! It paints heaven on the face that has it; it wakens the sleeping souls that meet it.

At the bottom of Margaret Woffington's heart lay a soul, unknown to the world, scarce known to herself—a heavenly harp, on which ill airs of passion had been played—but still it was there, in tune with all that is true, pure, really great and good. And now the flush that a great heart sends to the brow, to herald great actions, came to her cheek and brow.

"Humble!" she cried. "Such as you are the diamonds of our race. You angel of truth and goodness, you have conquered!"

"Oh, yes! yes! Thank God, yes!"

"What a fiend I must be could I injure you! The poor heart we have both overrated shall be yours again, and yours for ever. In my hands it is painted glass; in the lustre of a love like yours it may become a priceless jewel." She turned her head away and pondered a moment, then suddenly offered to Mrs. Vane her hand with nobleness and majesty: "Can you trust me?" The actress too was divinely beautiful now, for her good angel shone through her.

"I could trust you with my life!" was the reply.

"Ah! if I might call you friend, dear lady, what would I not do—suffer—resign—to be worthy that

o, not friend!" cried the warm, innocent;
"sister! I will call you sister. I have no

er!" said Mrs. Woffington, "Oh, do not!
! Alas! you do not know what you
sacred name to me, from lips so pure as
rs. Vane," said she, timidly, "would you
resumptuous if I begged you to—to let
?"

were scarce spoken before Mrs. Vane's
eathed round her neck, and that
laid sweetly to hers.

n strained her to her bosom, and
whose grandeur the world,
ans, never discovered, had
beat against each other.
to find another out as the

into a passion of tears
and tighter, in a half-
stook the cause, but she

'be comforted. I love

you. My heart warmed to you the first moment I saw you. A woman's love and gratitude are something. Ah! you will never find me change. This is for life, look you."

"God grant it!" cried the other poor woman. "Oh, it is not that, it is not that; it is because I am so little worthy of this. It is a sin to deceive you. I am not good like you. You do not know me!"

"You do not know yourself if you say so!" cried Mabel; and to her hearer the words seemed to come from heaven. "I read faces," said Mabel. "I read yours at sight, and you are what I set you down; and nobody must breathe a word against you, not even yourself. Do you think I am blind? You are beautiful, you are good, you are my sister, and I love you!"

CHARLES READE.

By permission of Messrs. CHATTO & WINDUS.

THE GALLOPING SQUIRE.

COME, I'll show you a country that none can surpass,

For a flyer to cross like a bird on the wing.

We have acres of woodland and oceans of grass,

We have game in the autumn and cubs in the spring,

We have scores of good fellows hang out in the shire,

But the best of them all is the Galloping Squire.

The Galloping Squire to the saddle has got,

While the dewdrop is melting in gems on the thorn,

From the kennel he's drafted the pick of his lot,

How they swarm to his cheer! How they fly to his horn!

Like harriers, turning or chasing like fire.

"I can trust 'em, each hound!" says the Galloping Squire.

One wave of his arm, to the covert they throng;

"Yoi! wind him! and rouse him! By Jove, he's away!"

Through a gap in the oaks see them speeding along
O'er the open like pigeons: "They mean it to-day!

You may jump till you're sick—you may spur till you tire!

For it's catch 'em who can!" says the Galloping Squire.

Then he takes the old horse by the head, and he sails

In the wake of his darlings, all ear and all eye,
As they come in his line, o'er banks, fences and rails,

The cramped ones to creep, and the fair ones to fly.

It's a very queer place that will put in the mire
Such a rare one to ride as the Galloping Squire.

But a fallow has brought to their noses the pack,
 And the pasture beyond is with cattle-stains
 spread
 One wave of his arm, and the Squire in a crack
 Has lifted and thrown in the beauties at head.
 "On a morning like this, it's small help you re-
 quire,
 But he's forward, I'll swear!" says the Galloping
 Squire.

So forty fair minutes they run and they race,
 'Tis a heaven to some! 'tis a lifetime to all;
 Though the horses we ride are such gluttons for
 pace,
 There are stout ones that stop, there are safe
 ones that fall.
 But the names of the vanquished need never tran-
 spire
 For they're all in the rear of the Galloping Squire.
 Till the gamest old varmint that ever drew
 breath,
 All stiffened and draggled, held high for a
 throw,
 O'er the Squire's jolly visage, is grinning in death,
 Ere he dashes him down to be eaten below;
 While the daws flutter out from a neighbouring
 spire
 At the thrilling who-whoop of the Galloping
 Squire.

And the labourer at work, and the lord in his
 hall,
 Have a jest or a smile when they hear of the
 sport,
 In ale or in claret he's toasted by all,
 For they never expect to see more of the sort.
 And long may it be ere he's forced to retire
 For we breed very few like the Galloping Squire.

G. J. WHYTE-MELVILLE.

By permission of Messrs. WARD, LOCK & Co.

THE OYSTER SEASON.

1. SPOOPENDYKE OPENING OYSTERS.

"My dear," queried Mr. Spoopendyke, "did you put those oysters on the cellar floor with the round shells down, as I told you to?"

"I did most of 'em," replied Mrs. Spoopendyke. "Some of 'em wouldn't stay that way. They turned right over."

"Must have been extraordinarily intelligent oysters," murmured Mr. Spoopendyke, eyeing her with suspicion. "They didn't any of 'em stand up on end, and ask for the morning paper, did they?"

"You know what I mean," fluttered Mrs.

Spoopendyke. "They tipped over sideways, and so I laid them on the flat shell."

"That's right," grunted Mr. Spoopendyke. "You want to give an oyster his own way, or you'll hurt his feelings. Suppose you bring up some of those gifted oysters, and an oyster-knife, and we'll eat 'em."

Mrs. Spoopendyke hurried away, and pattered back with the feast duly set out on a tea-waiter, which she placed before Mr. Spoopendyke with a flourish.

"Now," said she, drawing up her sewing-chair, and resting her elbows on her knees, and her chin on her hands, "when you get all you want, you may open me some."

Mr. Spoopendyke whirled the knife round his head, and brought it down with a sharp crack, then he chipped away at the end a moment, and jabbed at what he supposed was the opening. The knife slipped, and ploughed the bark off his thumb.

"Won't come open, won't ye?" he shouted, fetching it another lick, and jabbing away again. "Haven't completed your census of who's out here working at ye, have ye?" and he brought it another whack; "perhaps ye think I haven't fully made up my mind to inquire within, don't ye?" and he rammed the point of the knife at it, knocking the skin off his knuckles.

"That isn't the way to open an oyster," suggested Mrs. Spoopendyke.

"Look here," roared Mr. Spoopendyke, turning fiercely on his wife; "have you got any private understanding with this oyster? Has the oyster confided in you the particular way in which he wants to be opened?"

"No—o!" stammered Mrs. Spoopendyke, "only I thought——"

"This is no time for thought!" shouted Mr. Spoopendyke, banging away at the edge of the shell. "This is a moment for battle; and if I've happened to catch this oyster during office hours, he's going to enter into relations with the undersigned. Come out, will ye?" he yelled, as the knife flew up his sleeve. "Maybe ye don't recognise the voice of Spoopendyke. Come out, ye measly coward, before ye make an enemy of me for life!" and he belted away at the shell with the handle of the knife, and spattered mud like a dredging-machine.

"Let me get you a hammer to crack him with," recommended Mrs. Spoopendyke, hovering over her husband in great perturbation.

"Don't want any hammer," howled Mr. Spoopendyke, slamming around with his knife. "S'pose I'm going to use brute force on a measly fish that I could swallow alive if I could only get him out of his house? Open your measly premises!" raved Mr. Spoopendyke, stabbing at the oyster vindictively, and slicing his shirt-sleeve clear to the elbow. "Come forth, and enjoy the society of Spoopendyke!" And the worthy gentleman foamed at the

mouth, and he sank back in his chair, and contemplated his stubborn foe with glaring eyes.

"I'll tell you what to do," exclaimed Mrs. Spoonpendyke, radiant with a profound idea. "Crack him in the door."

"That's the scheme," grinned Mr. Spoonpendyke, with horrible contortions of visage. "Fetch me the door. Set that door right before me on a plate. This oyster is going to stay here. If you think this oyster is going to have any change of climate until he strikes the tropics of Spoonpendyke, you don't know the domestic habits of shell-fish. Loose your hold!" squealed Mr. Spoonpendyke, returning to the charge, and fetching the bivalve a prodigious whack. "Come into the outer world, where all is gay and beautiful. Come out, and let me introduce you to my wife." And Mr. Spoonpendyke laid the oyster on the arm of his chair, and slugged him remorselessly.

"Wait," squealed Mrs. Spoonpendyke, "here's one with his mouth open," and she pointed cautiously at a gaping oyster, who had evidently taken down the shutters to see what the row was about.

"Don't care a measly nickle with a hole in it," protested Mr. Spoonpendyke, thoroughly impatient. "Here's one that's going to open his mouth, or the resurrection will find him still wrestling with the ostensible head of this family. Ow!" and Mr. Spoonpendyke, having rammed the knife into the palm of his hand, slammed the oyster against the chimney-piece, where it was shattered, and danced around the room wriggling with wrath and agony.

"Never mind the oysters, dear," cried Mrs. Spoonpendyke, following him around, and trying to disengage his wounded hand from his armpit.

"Who's minding 'em?" roared Mr. Spoonpendyke, standing on one leg, and bending up double. "I tell ye that when I start to inflict discipline on a narrow-minded oyster that won't either accept an invitation or send regrets, he's going to mind me! Where's the oyster? Show me the oyster! Arraign the oyster!"

"Upon my word, you've opened him," giggled Mrs. Spoonpendyke, picking up the smashed bivalve between the tips of her thumb and forefinger.

"Won't have him," sniffed Mr. Spoonpendyke, eyeing the broken shell, and firing his defeated enemy into the grate. "If I can't go in the front door of an oyster, I'm not going down the scuttle. That all comes of laying 'em on the flat shell," he continued, suddenly recollecting that his wife was to blame for the whole business. "Now you take the rest of 'em down, and lay 'em as I told you to."

"Yes, dear."

"And another time you want any oysters, you sit around in the cellar, and when they open their mouths you put sticks in. You hear?"

"Yes, dear."

And Mrs. Spoonpendyke took the bivalves back,

resolving that the next time they were in demand they would crawl out of their shells, and walk upstairs arm in arm, before she would have any hand in the mutilation of her poor, dear, suffering husband by bringing them up herself.

STANLEY HUNTLEY.

FRANCESCA.

A STORY OF VENICE.

What avails a confession, O father, when the doom of the morning is near,
When my heart is as rock to your teaching? when mine eyes shed no penitent tear?
Could I live my life o'er I would do what I have done again though I saw

At the end of my pathway the scaffold and axe in the grip of the law,
As I see them to-night. Are the people you shrive of a metal like this,

Who think only of life as a torture, of death as a heaven of bliss.

Ah! well I'll confess if you wish it, if only because you have brought
The news that I longed for, the tale of her madness, and how when distraught
She babbles of blood and the sight that she saw when he yielded his breath,
Like Sisera slain by a woman, and unfaith found requital in death.

Do you know what love is, O my father, when it comes to a girl of the south,
Like a swift summer rain to a land that has known desolation and drought;

Like the news of his freedom to one who has languished in fetters for long,
Like the joy in the heart of the dumb could his lips frame articulate song:

Like the star to the ken of the sailor on black and tempestuous night,
Like the sun to the deep and the darkness at God's command "Let there be light."

He was strong as the sons of Olympus and fair as the men of his home,

The Norland, whence in the old days came the Goths to the leaguer of Rome,

And his hair was the hue of the wheat when the autumn makes golden the corn,

His eyes were as blue as the sky that is seen on a midsummer morn;

While his voice was as sweet as the music that comes from the Apennine rills,

And it echoed all day in my heart-like a song given back by the hills.

A painter he was, I a model, who sat to him, you understand,

How I saw myself limned by his brush while I blushed at the touch of his hand;

How I steadied myself like the marble, and posed as I thought all the while
I would turn to that marble itself for some love in his answering smile.

So the fair weeks ran on till one day he turned gaily towards me and said,
Those poor cheeks (touching mine) have grown paler than that once were so rosy and red.
I'm in holiday mood, let us go in a gondola down the lagoon

And see how this Venice of yours can gain magic from light of the moon.

Gain magic, ah me! how my pulses still beat at the thought of that night

When we voyaged alone on the water enwrapped in the tender moonlight.

Did his ear hear the beat of my heart, did his eyes see the passion in mine,

That they softened when gazing upon me and flashed back an answering sign?

Did he know that I loved him so well had he asked me to leave him and lie

'Mid the dead 'neath the treacherous wave, I had gone at his bidding to die?

Did he know that my love was a love that no lips and no language could tell,

That *with him* my life was a heaven, *without him* the world was a hell?

Then he spoke, and the words that he said were ineffably tender and sweet,

And I keep them engraved on my heart—No, my father, I cannot repeat,

E'en under the seal of confession, what, when on the scaffold's dread stair,

With the flash of the axe in mine eyes, shall be last on my lips like a prayer.

And my answer, what need of reply, he could see it was there in my face,

I was his, soul and body to love. So the halcyon days sped apace,

And my great love grew with them and his. Ah! he loved me at first I will swear,

But a man's vows are written on water, a man's words are traced upon air.

In good truth I was happy and saw, as the hours of delight flitted by

No clouds overhanging our path, and no portent of storm in the sky:

Would to Heaven I had died in those days of such trust and such exquisite bliss.

With belief in his love in my heart, and my lips yet on fire from his kiss.

One day passing Florian's café, and just on the fringe of the crowd,

Two young artists I knew sauntered past: quoth the elder one speaking aloud,

"So our Northerner marries." "Ah, yes," said the other, "she's wealthy and fair,

With the beauty the islanders praise, very pale, with the cold English stare

Of disdain of all others." "Quite so," said his friend; "and I hear they go home

After six or eight weeks (it's the fashion, of honeymoon dalliance at Rome."

"And what of Francesca, the model?—I thought there was something——" "Why, yes,"

Said the other, light laughing, "of course, but *she* won't break her heart." From the press

I broke out like a wild thing and fled I can scarcely tell how to my home,

With the words surging hot in my brain, "weeks of honeymoon dalliance in Rome."

Then methinks I was mad. Do you know how the lost angels felt when they fell

From their places in Heaven to abysses of doom and the innermost Hell?

Even so had I fallen I thought, and I cried with bent knees and bowed head,

O God, strike again in thy mercy! and number me straight with the dead.

But death comes not to those who would fain make him welcome, and so when at length

All my passion was past and the pain was there only, I garnered my strength

And went forth with a mighty resolve in my heart I would see her and pray

She would yield him to me, for I loved him, and since for this many a day

He had been mine alone, and my place was e'en now as of right by his side.

If she gave him not up in sheer pity, I had still higher hopes from her pride.

"And what would you with me to?" she asked, and I, saw at a look she was fair,

With a face pale as sea-foam, surrounded by marvellous nimbus of hair.

But cold eyes steely-blue, and stern glance, and I knew from the lines of her mouth

She had all of the ice of the north in her heart, and no fire of the south.

And I said, "I have come here to plead for my lost love; the man you have won

By your beauty and wealth, is to me as the light of our Italy's sun

To the flower, as the rain to parched earth, as the symbol divine

To the sinner: nay more, by the right of first conquest your lover is mine."

"My lover," she said, and her voice was as cold as the wintery wind;

"Will you tell me how *he* came to stoop e'en to look at a girl of your kind?

Leave me, wretch, and at once, lest my lackeys have orders to thrust you outside.

Yet stay, he is here, and shall answer this insult you put on his bride."

He strode in with one fierce glance at me, he went quickly to *her*, took her hand,

Kissed it humbly, then turning he said, "I confess I do not understand

What this means, nor your errand to one who has no part nor lot in your life.
Go, girl, for your presence pollutes the pure lady I win for my wife."

I had come there to plead, but the speech died away on my lips as I heard,
While my heart turned to flame at their looks and each scornful and insolent word;
And my love became hate on that instant, so deep that my eyesight grew dim
With the blood to my brain, at the thought of her laid in my place beside him.
And I reeled and had fallen, but steeled all my nerves and went forth, earth and sky
One black night before me: one thought at my heart that the traitor should die.

My old nurse had furnished the drug, and I carried the dagger he gave

On one Carnival day as we shot in our gondola over the wave;

And I watched him go out, 'twas to her, and I stealthily entered his room,
Drugged the red wine, then patiently waited his coming at last to his doom.

Hours past, but at length I could hear his impetuous step as of yore;

How my heart had beat high at the sound in the days that could come nevermore.

"You here!" he cried; and I made answer, "I came for I grieve we should part

In anger." Each word was a blood-drop outwrung from an agonized heart.

"That's right," he said, lightly, "I'm glad that my little Francesca at last

Takes a sensible view and forgives." "Yes," I answered, "now drink to the past

In the wine of oblivion, and since you have won a great triumph, 'tis said,

Be the white wine for me and do you, the young victor, fill up with the red."

So we clinked glasses gaily and talked of old days till I saw his eyes dim,

And he said, "Is my wine grown so strong that one goblet will make my head swim?

I would fain sleep Francesca," and then he lay down and he slept, and I knew

That the moment had come for the deed I had sworn on the dead Christ to do.

First I sent out his servant for her, and I watched him asleep e'er she came.

Did my fierce heart relent then. Ah, no! for in slumber his lips breathed her name,

And my hand gripped the dagger the firmer. In haste then she entered and said,

"Is he ill?" Then saw me and shrank back. "No," I shrieked, "but the traitor is dead!"

And before her I drove the sharp point deep and true to his heart, and I cried:

"See there lies your bridegroom, my lady, that never will welcome his bride."

Am I penitent say you. No! no! Since my soul by the dead man was slain,
Could he live, could he love, and once more prove as false—I could kill him again.
Let me wait till he comes from where waves of the Lido play round his grave-sod,
And we stand up together for judgment before the Tribunal of God!

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

London, June 5, 1837.

"WILL FRANK BUCHANAN WRITE?"

A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS.

PROLOGUE.

Extract from a letter received on 2nd October 1835, from a sympathetic friend:—

"I clip the death at foot of this page from this week's *Stage*. Is it not a condensed three-volume romance? Do not think it a liberty, but I feel sure this will afford you an idea for another poem."

DEATHS.

On the 18th instant, at — Street, Leicester, Reginald Frank, the only beloved child of Laura Buchanan, aged two years and seven months. *Will Frank Buchanan write?*

[This advertisement is a true one save for the substituted names.—C. S.]

ACT I.

A MAIDEN, blest with loving eyes,
And soul concealed from sin;
A man who boldly dares and dies,
Weak womankind to win.
A girl, heartsick of dreary days,
Whose thoughts to distance swim;
He, with her fair hair idly plays,
She, blindly worships him.

They met, as other lovers meet,
Beneath life's Calvary!
He would fling flowers at her feet,
Without him she would die.
No terror creeps to him, alas!
On her no shadows fall,
A gayer sunlight gilds the grass,
When Love is Lord of all.

He thought of her, as something dear
To cherish and possess,
Her sigh was music in his ear,
His triumph—her caress!
Well! he was lord if she were weak,
He failed where she was strong;
Men are but madmen do they seek
A Hymn from out Love's song!

She thought of him as half divine,
 A monarch who had come,
 Upon her lonely life to shine.
 And lead her proudly home.
 She paced her chamber, to and fro,
 Her praying face was white,
 God! send the answer, yes or no,
 Will Frank Buchanan write?

ACT II.

A weary woman with a soul
 To ruin or to save!
 He was the rock where breakers roll,
 She was the storm-tost wave!
 The hair with which he used to play,
 The lips he loved to taste,
 Are nothing! Night has followed day,
 Wealth yielded all to waste.

She was a gambler at the time!
 Staked honour at the throw,
 Flung down her reputation! Name!
 He smiled that it was so.
 For him she sacrificed her all,
 And, helpless to resist,
 Like some poor bird, did he but call,
 She settled on his wrist.

He left her broken, flung aside,
 A more than ruined life,
 A woman who was never bride,
 But more in soul than wife!
 He took her up his taste to please,
 The coward dared depart
 When she was praying on her knees
 For this accursed heart!

One night she faced her misery
 With resolution grim;
 He dared to hope that she would die,
 She bravely prayed for him:
 "God! sometimes pitiless to men,
 Read my torn soul aright!
 If I be patient, Lord! oh then
 Will Frank Buchanan write?"

ACT III.

A mother with a weary face,
 An infant at her breast,
 Behind her—unabsolved disgrace,
 Before—eternal rest!
 Alone! No, this sweet part of him
 Must on her bosom lie,
 And still the star-crowned cherubim
 Sing of eternity!

She creeps in silence to the place
 So long shut out from sight
 In agony she bows her face
 Before the altar light:

"Sweet Heart of Jesus! Heart of Rest!
 Pure Mary! Mother mild!
 Behold the wounds upon my breast;
 Hear me—but save my child!"

Is there no music in the air
 To lift such prayers above,
 Where reigns the best of what was fair
 In Everlasting Love?
 Was there no mercy on that day
 To raise that lowly head?
 • She from God's altar crept away,
 To find—her child was dead!

There lay the blossom that was torn
 From the cold grasp of earth,
 Waiting an everlasting morn
 And a transcendent birth!
 But the pale woman bowed her head,
 Still praying; and that night
 Kissed *their* dead child, and sobbing, said,
 "Will Frank Buchanan write?"

CLEMENT SCOTT.

By permission of the Author.

THE POPE AND THE NET.

WHAT, he on whom our voices unanimously ran,
 Made Pope at our last Conclave? Full low his
 life began:
 His father earned the daily bread as just a fisher-
 man.

So much the more his boy minds book, gives proof
 of mother-wit,
 Becomes first Deacon, and then Priest, then
 Bishop: see him sit
 No less than Cardinals ere long, while no one cries
 "Unfit!"

But some one smirks, some other smiles, jogs elbow
 and nods head:
 Each winks at each: "I-faith, a rise! Saint Peter's
 net, instead
 Of sword and keys, is come in vogue!" You
 think he blushes red?

Not he, of humble heart! "Unworthy me!" he
 sighs:
 "From fisher's drudge to Church's prince—it is
 indeed a rise:
 So here's the way to keep the fact for ever in my
 eyes!"

And straightway in his palace hall, where com-
 monly is set
 Some coat of arms, some portraiture ancestral, lo,
 we met
 His mean estate's reminder in his fisher-father's
 net!

Which step conciliates all and some, stops cavil in a trice:

"The humble holy heart that holds of new-born pride no spice!

He's just the saint to choose for Pope!" Each adds, "Tis my advice"

So, Pope he was: and when we flocked—it's sacred slipper on—

To kiss his foot, we lifted eyes, alack the thing was gone—

That guarantee of lowliness—eclipsed that star which shone!

Each eyed his fellow, one and all kept silence. I cried "Pish!"

I'll make me spokesman for the rest, express the common wish.

Why, Father, is the net removed?" "Son, it hath caught the fish."

By permission of Messrs. SMITH, ELDER & CO.

A STEEPLECHASE AFTER A RUNAWAY WIFE.

RALPH BRANSCOMBE walked leisurely to his dressing-room, and was just proceeding to throw off his hunting-clothes, when he perceived a white object stuck into the corner of the looking-glass. It was a note, addressed to himself, and he was amazed when he recognised his wife's handwriting.

"What on earth is this?" he said aloud, and tore it open.

There were but a few lines, evidently written in haste and emotion.

"When you receive this," he read, "I shall be hundreds of miles away. Do not attempt to follow me: it would be useless. I have tried to love you, but it cannot be. Forget, if you cannot forgive,
DIANA."

He stuffed the letter into his pocket, seized his hat and hunting crop, and rushed to the stable-yard. Short as was the distance, he had rapidly thought over his course of action before he reached the stables.

"Do you know which way your mistress drove?" he asked a groom.

"Chalford way, sir, I believe," answered the man. "The mistress took a box with her, sir. She mentioned that she was going shopping, and told John to drive her to the station first."

"What time did she start?" continued Ralph, as quietly as he could.

"Three o'clock, sir," answered the man. "The brougham was ordered at a quarter to, sir, but missus was a little late getting away. Three o'clock went just as I opened the gate."

"Is James there?" asked Ralph again, burning

with impatience and anxiety, but struggling to appear cool. "James! saddle Black Swan at once, and girth her up tight. Look alive, man; I shall be down in three minutes."

And Ralph ran back into the house, into the library, where there was a time-table.

She started at three for Chalford, as if to catch a train at about four o'clock. For all the departures the 4.7 train would serve. Undoubtedly, that was the one they intended to take. If Ralph had not returned until the next day they would have been abroad hours before he reached home. Of course it was hopeless to get to Chalford in time. It was now ten minutes to four. The train would be due there in seventeen minutes; but as it stopped at Warboro', would it not be possible to catch the fugitives there? Ralph was sternly determined that he would overtake them if it was humanly possible. He would not have the family disgraced, and he would sooner shoot Colonel Mannering on the spot than see a paragraph on the elopement going the round of the papers. It was nearly nine miles to Warboro' Station by road, but two less across country. He again looked at his watch. Thirty-two minutes before the train was due! Black Swan ought to do it, if he took her on a bee line across country. She was thoroughbred, and jumped like a cat. She *must* do it, but there was not a moment to lose. Too much time had already been wasted, though he was quicker in consulting the time-book, and deciding on the course to pursue, than can be the reader in perusing the narrative of his doings. Ralph did not stop to exchange his pink for a more appropriate coat. As he sprang into the saddle and gave the mare her head he thought bitterly of the quarry he was now chasing. Was scarlet as correct a colour for wife-hunting as for fox-hunting? But all his energies, mental and bodily, were required for the work before him, and his thoughts had to be concentrated on the shortest cut to the station. He resolved not to lose a second if he could help it. He galloped down the avenue at top speed, and had disappeared before the astonished grooms knew what he was about. He would gain nothing by turning through Bray Copse; of that he felt sure; but at Long Wood he opened a bridle gate and scampered down the ride at full speed. The rays of an almost horizontal sun shone in his eyes as he passed out of the big covert and set the mare's head straight across the ploughs and fallows of the higher land. She flew the little fences in her stride, for this was the easiest part of the country to cross. Soon he came to the end of the Branscombe property, and the ground began to fall as he neared the Warboro' Vale. There had, so far, been nothing to stop him. He knew every inch of the way, and steered for handy gaps, negotiable fences, and gates it was easy to open. But the most difficult task was before him. His next "point" was Scratch Wood, and there was a wide expanse of grass to cross, intrenched

by two flights of posts and rails. It was out of the question to go round by the gates; he might lose two minutes. Black Swan had never had such a chance since she had been in the Branscombe stables. She stole across the turf like a shadow, her long, easy stride being exactly suited to the ground. The cold air rushed past Ralph's head, and cooled his heated brow. At the first post and rails the mare never stopped, but flew them in her stride; the next flight was higher, and the ground was soft. There was an ominous clatter of her heels on the timber, but Ralph sat well back and recovered her with a pull on the snaffle. Then he bore a little to the left up a farm road, where two gates were fortunately open, and on the firmer ground the mare recovered her wind, which the last wet meadow had tried a good deal. He hammered down a lane and up the rise leading to Scratch Wood, astonishing the driver of a cart heavily laden with straw. "Be the hounds here?" asked the man; but Ralph scarcely heard the question. Twilight was rapidly coming on, and the time was getting very short indeed. From Scratch Wood the line lay across the water meadows they had run over on the day when Ralph had first made the Colonel's acquaintance, and as he jumped the first ditch he remembered, with bitter regret, the words Fetlock had spoken to the Honourable Seaton Delaval on their way home. "It's her fancy man," the horse-dealer had said. Yes! her foolish, wild fancy; her fancy which no human nor divine law, no sense of gratitude nor of honour, was strong enough to drive out. Another ditch, and yet another, both gleaming yellow in the last tints of the sunset. Then he must ford the Warboro' brook. Ralph thought he knew the place well, yet when he reached the bank it seemed rather strange to him. This was evidently not the usual ford; he must have missed it somehow. For a moment he pulled up Black Swan. She was covered with foam, and her flanks were heaving. He looked at his watch; it was ten minutes past four. Thirteen were left to reach the station—nearly three miles to cross, even if the brook were safely forded. There must be no hesitation. A touch of the spurs, and the gallant mare plunged on. The water was deep, and the bottom bad; she floundered and lost her footing. Ralph was off her back in a moment, and sank in above his waist, but Black Swan, relieved of his weight, scrambled to her feet again, and he urged her on with his voice while he dragged her by the bridle. It seemed to him an eternity before they reached the bank, for the mud clung to his boots and dragged him back, while the mare struggled in the deep ooze. At last she stood on the grass, scared and shivering. The hillside looked black in the deepening twilight, but Ralph knew that there was nothing to stop them now till they reached the Station Road. He urged her up the turf, through a gap in the fence, into a convenient

furrow, and then he topped the hill, and saw the confused lights of Warboro' town below him on his right, while the red and green signals at the station were straight before him. Down he sped at the best gallop the mare could raise. She crashed through the next fences, barely rising to them, and then they were on firm grass again, marked out for future building-plots, but fortunately not yet cut up. Then down a steep lane, and to the left along a half-finished road, closed at the end by a post and rails. He thought there was a place where he could creep through, but as he galloped along the road he heard a whistle, and raising his eyes saw the signals shifted and the engine lamps approaching on the down line. That must be the train! Not fifty yards from the station, and to miss it! It should not be. He could not look for the gap. "Come up, old mare!" he shouted, as he drove the rowels cruelly into Black Swan's flanks, and rode at the timber. But she was done. She tried her best, and rose as high as she could, but she could not clear the top rail.

With a heavy thud, horse and rider crashed down on the hard road, while the grinding of the brake was heard from the station opposite, and the porters shouted "Warboro'! Warboro'!"

It was not for nothing that Ralph had ridden to hounds ever since he was a boy. His experience stood him in good stead on this momentous occasion. When the mare strove to rise at the rails, he drew his feet out of the stirrups; he guessed that she would come down, and rode, in fact, for a fall. Almost before her knees touched the ground, certainly before she rolled over on her side, he was on his feet, and leaving poor Black Swan to shift for herself, ran across the station yard into the building.

He darted through the booking-office on to the platform. The porters were banging the doors. He rushed along the train, and only slackened his speed when he came to the well-lighted first-class carriages. Glancing into each as he passed, he saw neither the Colonel nor Diana. The blinds were all up, and the passengers exposed to the full light of the station gas and the carriage lamps. But the last compartment in front, nearest the brake-van, was hermetically closed, and a narrow white label, with "Engaged" in red letters on it, was pasted diagonally across a side window.

"Open this door, Smith," said Ralph to his friend the station-master, who was busy at the van.

"Not this one, sir," answered Smith, recognising Ralph immediately. "I had a good day with the hounds, Mr. Ralph? Get in here, sir," and he led him to the next carriage.

"No, this one, Smith; look sharp. I know it's engaged. Never mind, I'll see you through it."

Smith stared. At that moment the guard of the train held up his hand, cried "Right forward!"

and gave his shrill whistle. Ralph dived into his pocket and brought out a handful of silver.

"Be sharp, man! Mum's the word! I'll see you right," and he stuffed the money into Smith's hand.

The train was moving, and Ralph seized the brass bar on the carriage. The station-master clicked his key and opened the door. Ralph swung himself in as the guard cried, "Now look out there, you'll be killed!" and the door was slammed behind him.

"This carriage is engaged," said a well-known voice; "you can't get in here."

It was Colonel Mannering in the near corner. Ralph had actually trodden on his toes. In the other corner, with her back to the engine, was a cloaked figure, which he recognised at once as Diana's. Startled by the sudden intrusion, she looked up.

"Ralph!" she cried, and buried her face in her hands.

The Colonel stared in blank amazement. It was undoubtedly an awkward position. The train was not timed to stop for another forty miles, and the three were bound to remain in each other's company for at least that number of minutes.

"Yes," said Ralph, endeavouring to recover his composure, "it is I. Providence has interfered to prevent your running away with my wife, Colonel Mannering."

"Sir," began the Colonel, "I don't understand by what right——"

"You don't understand by what right I have come to stop you? Indeed? I should have thought that even *your* intelligence would have grasped that much. However, first I have to talk to my wife. You and I will settle matters by-and-by."

The Colonel was too much taken by surprise to reply. In fact, it would have been difficult to frame an appropriate answer. Running away with another man's wife, as he undoubtedly was, he could scarcely assume the part of outraged virtue. At the moment, not being able to find anything to say, he held his peace. Ralph went over to the other side of the carriage, and sat down opposite his wife.

"Diana," he began, "you must come home with me. I am here to save you from disgrace. You have neglected my warnings, you have been fascinated by this man, but it is not too late. You can still return without any one but ourselves knowing what has happened, and at the next station you will have to get out with me."

Diana shook her head, but did not answer.

"You must," he continued. "It cannot, of course, any longer be a question of love and affection. That is at an end. But Sir Henry Branscombe's niece, Ralph Branscombe's wife, shall not be known as an outcast and a lost woman, as long as I am alive to prevent it."

"Mr. Branscombe," cried the Colonel, starting up, "you are insulting the lady."

"Insulting her!" sneered Ralph. "I wonder which of us two is insulting her? I, who am come to bring her back to her duty, to her home, and to an honourable life, or you, who have seduced her from her husband, and are going to make her your mistress?"

"Sir," exclaimed Mannering, flushing scarlet while Diana winced under the scathing words, "how dare you? There will, of course, be a divorce, and you are speaking to the future Mrs. Mannering."

"Indeed?" asked Ralph. "So you want to marry her? And you think the best way is to drag her through the mire of the Divorce Court first, and make Diana Branscombe a name to be bandied on the lips of every newspaper reader in the kingdom? No, Colonel Mannering, I shall not help you to that. On the whole, I would rather shoot you and take my chance of being hung. My wife would, at any rate, not be spoken of and sneered at as a lost woman by every ruffian in England. If you are so anxious to marry her now, why did you not propose to her before? She would have accepted you soon enough."

"Last year," answered the Colonel, glad to have at last a reasonable chance, "it was impossible for me to marry."

"Why?" asked Ralph, incredulously.

"Because I had contracted an unfortunate marriage when very young. My wife was still living. She died suddenly this summer."

"If what you tell me is true," replied Ralph, after a few moments' thought, "you are not quite such an unmitigated villain as I thought you were."

The Colonel started violently.

"Oh," continued Ralph, "do not excite yourself. I am not here to pay you compliments. I thought you a degree worse than you are; that is all. But even now I am by no means sure that you would marry Diana, even if she were free. She might have no money, you know."

Mannering again started to his feet.

"Anyhow," continued Ralph, now quite calm, "I shan't give you the chance. I have already told you that I intend my wife to come home with me. If you object actively, I shall throw you out of this carriage."

"I should like to see you try," said the Colonel, smiling.

"I don't think you would, much," replied the husband. "I'm pretty handy with my fists, sometimes. But it would not be good form to have a fight in the presence of a lady, would it? So we will dismiss that question for a moment. You cannot very well prevent my taking Mrs. Branscombe home when the train stops at Mornington, because I should appeal to the police, and the police would scarcely give you a right to take her

away. There would only be more scandal for nothing."

Now, at last, Diana spoke:

"It's of no use my going home, Ralph. I am afraid I should run away next time I had a chance."

"Poor Diana!" sighed he, again addressing himself to her; "and poor me! Do you hate me so very much?"

"Not at all," replied Diana. "I like you! Oh, dear! if you were only my brother, I would love you."

"Do you love him so very much?" asked Ralph. She merely bowed her head.

"My dear Diana," Ralph went on, "it is a terrible fate, but you and I must make the best of it. You must put up with me till I break my neck, or die of a broken heart. For, indeed, my heart is broken, Diana, and I shall never hold up my head again."

She looked at him, doubtfully. There was no mistaking his sad eyes, nor the expression of his voice.

"We have made a dreadful mistake," Ralph went on, "and do you think I can ever be happy again, knowing that she whom I have loved more than my life has been false to the vows she swore at the altar? If you are wretched because you love another, I shall be equally wretched, having loved you in vain. You will be without a husband, I without a wife. But until God puts an end to our misery by taking one of us away, we must bear it. Just think of your uncle, if, as may occur, his senses return! Think of his agony at knowing how you have erred! Think of your own future life—at the best, a *divorcée*—pointed at, talked about, refused admittance by the very people who were at your feet when you were Mrs. Branscombe; with a conscience of evil which will not let you rest, scorned by this world, and unworthy of a better! That would be the future of the brilliant, beautiful, and clever Diana Branscombe."

Diana groaned, and hid her face in her handkerchief.

"This," continued Ralph, "is only a suggestion of what would happen. Your misery would pursue you day and night. In the midst of gaieties you would think of the home you had made desolate, of the old man you had disgraced. And what sort of gaieties would be yours? Only such amusements as are obtainable for a little money. Wherever honour and position are the keys of admittance, you, Diana, would be excluded. There is not a pack of hounds with which you could show your face; you would have to look from outside on the world you love so well; and as to society, you would be a pariah. Can your love for this man compensate for all the suffering you would heap on yourself, on me, and on others?"

Diana was a woman, and stood up for her lover, even now. She was sobbing; but between her

sobs she said, in almost inaudible tones, "I cannot help it. He is good and brave; I must go with him."

The Colonel had, to use an Americanism, been "lying low" during the past few minutes. He saw that the game was going against him, and that if he did not interfere, Diana would yield to her husband. He resolved to play his trump card. He was not the man to give up without a struggle the woman whom he loved passionately, as far as his nature could understand love—the woman for whom he had lied and intrigued during the past twelve months. A supreme struggle must be made. Anyhow he felt that he would have to fight Ralph sooner or later, perhaps some morning on a desolate field in Belgium, without any advantage on his side. Better fight him now, while Diana was still his own ally, and when by a bold stroke he could secure the victory.

Ralph was stooping forward on his seat, holding Diana's hands. Quick as thought, the Colonel hit him on the temple with his left hand, and then throwing his right arm round the neck of poor Ralph, who had fallen against the carriage door, he nearly throttled him.

"Quick, Diana, let down the window and open the door! That side is not locked. We can throw him out. Quick, I say!" he cried, as Diana stared in vacant amazement. "He won't hurt; there's no other line on that side."

But a sudden revulsion came over Diana. A veil seemed to fall from her eyes, and suddenly she recognised Colonel Mannering in his true colours. Was this then the man for whom she had betrayed her brave and loyal husband? One who would not scruple even to murder; to low dastardly garrotting, to gain his ends? Cowed by her outraged husband's words, he had waited patiently till his victim's back was turned, and had then smitten him cruelly from behind! And for this man, who was trying to throw an innocent fellow-creature, one whom he had grossly injured, out of a train flying over the ground at the rate of fifty miles an hour, for him she was going to sacrifice her whole life, and the happiness of all who were dear to her! She grew sick at the thought. But it was not the time to faint, and Diana Branscombe was not the woman to give way.

"Let him go, Colonel Mannering. Take your hands off, I say," she cried, wrenching the soldier's arm from Ralph's throat. "Cruel coward!" And she flashed her black eyes at him, as he fell back on the seat, as much overwhelmed by her changed manner and words as by her violent grasp of his arm.

Ralph struggled to his feet, breathless, exhausted; and looked round all dazed. The Colonel sprang at him again. Diana threw herself between them.

"You shall not touch my husband!" she cried,

holding up her right hand menacingly. "If you dare, I shall break this glass, and call the guard. I shall tell him that you tried to commit a murder! a murder, do you hear?"

"Diana!" murmured the Colonel, surprised, while Ralph was endeavouring to collect his senses; "what do you mean, my love?"

"Your love!" and her lip curled. "Shame on me, that I have ever allowed you to use such a term, and to use it with reason! Blind fool that I was, to be bewitched by your sweet words and your soft eyes. Oh, God! Oh, God! can I ever be forgiven?"

And her nerves gave way to the strain, as she sank back on the seat, and hid her face in the cushion.

The two men glared at each other. Ralph attempted to arrange his dress, which had sorely suffered since he left Silvestone, and a strange figure he looked. His boots were covered with mud, his red coat bespattered and torn, his arm was bruised from the fall at Warboro' station, his temple bleeding from the Colonel's cruel blow, his collar and tie pulled out of all shape in the struggle, his hat battered, hanging behind him by the string. The train was slackening speed. He pulled up the rug which had covered Diana's knees, and threw it around him.

"We get out here, Colonel Mannering," he said. "Please to make room."

And he raised his almost unconscious wife from her seat, and helped her on to the platform.

"WANDERER."

From "Fair Diana," by permission of Messrs. BRADBURY, AGNEW & Co., Limited.

RELIEVING GUARD.

CAME the relief. "What, sentry, ho!
How passed the night through thy long waking?"

"Cold, cheerless, dark—as may befit
The hour before the dawn is breaking."

"No sight? no sound?" "No; nothing save
The plover from the marches calling,
And in yon western sky, about
An hour ago, a star was falling."

"A star? There's nothing strange in that."
"No, nothing; but, above the thicket,
Somehow it seemed to me that God
Somewhere had just relieved a picket."

BRET HARTE.

IN HOSPITAL.

ENTER PATIENT.

THE morning mists still haunt the stony street;
The northern summer air is shrill and cold;
And lo, the Hospital, gray, quiet, old,
Where life and death like friendly chaffers meet
Thro' the loud spaciousness and draughty gloom
A small, strange child—so aged yet so young!—
Her little arm besplinted and beslung,
Precedes me gravely to the waiting-room.
I limp behind, my confidence all gone.
The gray-haired soldier-porter waves me on;
And on I crawl, and still my spirits fail:
A tragic meanness seems so to environ
These corridors and stairs of stone and iron,
Cold, naked, clean—half-workhouse and half-jail.

BEFORE THE OPERATION.

BEHOLD me waiting—waiting for the knife.
A little while, and at a leap I storm
The thick, sweet mystery of chloroform,
The drunken dark, the little death-in-life.
The gods are good to me: I have no wife.
No innocent child, to think of as I near
The fateful minute; nothing all-too dear
Unmans me for my bout of passive strife.
Yet am I tremulous and a trifle sick,
And, face to face with chance, I shrink a little:
My hopes are strong, my will is something weak.
Here comes the basket? Thank you. I am ready.
But, gentlemen my porters, life is brittle:
You carry Cæsar and his fortunes—steady!

VIGIL.

LIVED on one's back,
In the long hours of repose
Life is a practical nightmare—
Hideous asleep or awake.

Shoulders and loins
Ache . . . !
Ache, and the mattress,
Run into boulders and hammocks,
Glows like a kén, while the bedclothes—
Tumbling, importunate, daft—
Ramble and roll, and the gas,
Screwed to its lowmest,
An inevitable atom of light,
Haunts, and a stertorous sleeper
Snores me to hate and despair.

All the old time
Surges malignant before me;
Old voices, old kisses, old songs
Blossom derisive about me:
While the new days
Pass me in endless procession:

A pageant of shadows
Silently, leeringly wending
On . . . and still on . . . still on.

Far in the stillness a cat
Languishes loudly. A cinder
Falls, and the shadows
Lurch to the leap of the flame. The next
man to me

Turns with a moan; and the snorer,
The drug like a rope at his throat,
Gasps, gurgles, snorts himself free, as the
night-nurse,

Noiseless and strange,
Her bull's-eye half-lanterned in apron,
(Whispering me, 'Are ye no sleepin' yet?')
Passes, list-slipped and peering,
Round . . . and is gone.

Sleep comes at last—
Sleep full of dreams and misgivings—
Broken with brutal and sordid
Voices and sounds that impose on me,
Ere I can wake to it,
The unnatural, intolerable day.

DISCHARGED.

Carry me out
Into the wind and the sunshine,
Into the beautiful world.

O the wonder, the spell of the streets!
The stature and strength of the horses,
The rustle and echo of footfalls,
The flat roar and rattle of wheels!
A swift tram floats huge on us . . .
It's a dream?
The smell of the mud in my nostrils
Blows brave—like a breath of the sea!

As of old,
Ambulant, undulant drapery,
Vaguely and strangely provocative,
Flutters and beckons. O yonder—
Scarlet!—the glint of a stocking!
Sudden a spire
Wedged in the mist! O the houses,
The long lines of lofty, gray houses,
Cross-hatched with shadow and light!
These are the streets . . .
Each is an avenue leading
Whither I will!

Free . . . !
Dizzy, hysterical, faint,
I sit, and the carriage rolls on with me
Into the wonderful world.

W. E. HENLEY.

By permission of the Author.

JEWSEPPY.

"Yes, sir!" said the Colonel. "Being an American, I'm naturally in favour of elevating the oppressed and down-trodden, provided, of course, they live in other countries. All Americans are in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, because it would elevate the Irish masses, and keep them at home; but if I was living in Ireland, perhaps I might prefer elevating Russian Jews or Bulgarian Christians. You see the trouble with elevating the oppressed at home is that the moment you get them elevated they begin to oppress you. There is no better fellow in the world than the Irishman, so long as you govern him, but when he undertakes to govern you, it's time to look out for daybreak to Westward. You see we've been there, and know all about it.

"Did I ever tell you about Jewseppy? He was an organ-grinder, and, take him by and large, he was the best organ-grinder I ever met. He could throw an amount of expression into 'Annie Rooney,' or, it might be, 'The Old Folks at Home,' that would make the strongest men weep, and leave anything at him that they could lay their hands to. He wasn't a Jew, as you might suppose from his name, but only an Italian—'Jewseppy' being what the Italians would probably call a Christian name, if they were Christians. I knew him when I lived in Oshkosh, some twenty years ago. My daughter, who had studied Italian, used to talk to him in his native language; that is, she would ask him if he was cold, or hungry, or ashamed, or sleepy, as the books direct, but as he never answered in the way laid down in the books, my daughter couldn't understand a word he said, and so the conversation would begin to flag. I used to talk to him in English, which he could speak middling well, and I found him cranky, but intelligent.

"He was a little, wizened, half-starved looking man, and if he had only worn shabby black clothes, you would have taken him for a millionaire's confidential clerk, he was that miserable in appearance. He had two crazes—one was for monkeys, who were, he said, precisely like men, only they had four hands, and tails, which they could use as lassos, all of which were in the nature of modern improvements, and showed that they were an improvement on the original pattern of men. His other craze was his sympathy for the oppressed. He wanted to liberate everybody, including convicts, and have everybody made rich by law, and allowed to do anything he might want to do. He was what you would call an Anarchist to-day, only he didn't believe in disseminating his views by dynamite.

"He had a monkey that died of consumption, and the way that Jewseppy grieved for the monkey would have touched the heart of an old-fashioned Calvinist, let alone a heart of ordinary stone. For

nearly a month he wandered around without his organ, occasionally doing odd jobs of work, which made most people think that he was going out of his mind. But one day a menagerie came to town, and in the menagerie was what the show bill called a gorilla. It wasn't a genuine gorilla, as Professor Amariah G. Twitchell, of our University, proved after the menagerie men had refused to give him and his family free tickets. However, it was an animal to that effect, and it would probably have made a great success, for our public, though critical, is quick to recognise real merit, if it wasn't that the beast was very sick. This was Jewseppy's chance, and he went for it as if he had been a born speculator. He offered to buy the gorilla for two dollars, and the menagerie men, thinking the animal was as good as dead, were glad to get rid of it, and calculated that Jewseppy would never get the worth of the smallest fraction of his two dollars. There is where they got left, for Jewseppy knew more about monkeys than any man living, and could cure any sick monkey that called him in, provided, of course, the disease was one which medical science could collar. In the course of a month he got the gorilla thoroughly repaired, and was giving him lessons in the theory and practice of organ-grinding.

"The gorilla didn't take to the work kindly, which, Jewseppy said, was only another proof of his grand intellect, but Jewseppy trained him so well that it was not long before he could take the animal with him when he went out with the organ, and have him pass the plate. The gorilla always had a line round his waist, and Jewseppy held the end of it, and sort of telegraphed to him through it when he wanted him to come back to the organ. Then, too, he had a big whip, and he had to use it on the gorilla pretty often. Occasionally, he had to knock the animal over the head with the butt end of the whip handle, especially when he was playing something on the organ that the gorilla didn't like, such as 'Marching through Georgia,' for instance. The gorilla was a great success as a plate passer, for all the men were anxious to see the animal, and all the women were afraid not to give something when the beast put the plate under their noses. You see he was as strong as two or three men, and his arms were as long as the whole of his body, not to mention that his face was a deep blue, all of which helped to make him the most persuasive beast that ever took up a collection.

"Jewseppy had so much to say to me about the gorilla's wonderful intelligence that he made me tired, and one day I asked him if he thought it was consistent with his principles to keep the animal in slavery. 'You say he is all the same as a man,' said I. 'Then why don't you give him a show? You keep him oppressed and down-trodden the whole time. Why don't you let him grind the organ for awhile, and take up the collection yourself? Turn about is fair play, and I can't see why

the gorilla shouldn't have his turn at the easy end of the business.' The idea seemed to strike Jewseppy where he lived. He was a consistent idiot. I'll give him credit for that. He wasn't ready to throw over his theories every time he found they didn't pay. Now that I had pointed out to him his duty towards the gorilla he was disposed to do it. You see he reasoned that while it would only be doing justice to the beast to change places with him, it would probably increase the receipts. When a man can do his duty and make money by it, his path is middling plain, and after Jewseppy had thought it over he saw that he must do justice to the gorilla without delay.

"It didn't take the beast long to learn the higher branches of hand-organing. He saw the advantages of putting the money in his own pocket instead of collecting it and handing it over to Jewseppy, and he grasped the idea that when he was pushing the little cart that carried the organ, and turning the handle, he was holding a much better place in the community than when he was dancing and begging at the end of a rope. I thought, a day or two after I had talked to Jewseppy, that there was considerable uproar in town, but I didn't investigate it until towards evening, when there seemed to be a sort of riot or temperance meeting, or something of the kind, in front of my house, and I went out to see about it. There were about two thousand people there watching Jewseppy and his gorilla, or rather the gorilla and his Jewseppy. The little man had been elevating the oppressed with great success. A long rope was tied around his waist, and he was trotting around among the people, taking up the collection, and dancing between times. The gorilla was wearing Jewseppy's coat, and was grinding away at the organ with one hand, and holding Jewseppy's rope with the other. Every few minutes, he would haul in the rope hand over hand, empty all the money out of Jewseppy's pocket, and start him out again. If the man stopped to speak to anybody for a moment the gorilla would haul him in and give him a taste of the whip, and if he didn't collect enough money to suit the gorilla's idea, the animal would hold him out at arm's length with one hand and lay into him with the other till the crowd were driven wild with delight. Nothing could induce them to think that Jewseppy was in earnest when he begged them to protect him. They supposed it was all a part of the play, and the more he implored them to set him free, the more they laughed and said that 'thisyer Eyetalian was a bang-up actor.'

"As soon as Jewseppy saw me he began to tell me of his sufferings. His story lacked continuity, as you might say, for he would no sooner get started in his narrative than the gorilla would jerk the rope as a reminder to him to attend strictly to business if he wanted to succeed in his profession. Jewseppy said that as soon as he tied the rope

around his waist and put the handle of the organ in the gorilla's hand the beast saw his chance, and proceeded to take advantage of it. He had already knocked the man down twice with the handle of the whip, and had lashed him till he was black and blue, besides keeping him at work since seven o'clock that morning without anything to eat or drink.

"At this point the gorilla hauled Jewseppy in and gave him a fairly good thrashing for wasting his time in conversation. When the man came around again with the plate I told him that he was taking in more money than he had ever taken in before, and that this ought to console him, even if the consciousness that he was doing justice to the oppressed had no charms for him. I'm sorry to say that Jewseppy used such bad language that I really couldn't stay and listen to him any longer. I understood him to say that the gorilla took possession of every penny that was collected, and would be sure to spend it on himself, but as this was only what Jewseppy had been accustomed to do it ought not to have irritated a man with a real sense of justice. Of course, I was sorry that the little man was being ill-treated, but he was tough, and I thought that it would not hurt him if the gorilla were to carry out his course of instruction in the duty of elevating the oppressed a little longer. I have always been sort of sorry that I did not interfere, for although Jewseppy was only a foreigner who couldn't vote, and was besides altogether too set in his ideas, I didn't want him to come to any real harm. After that day a man ever saw Jewseppy, dead or alive. He was seen about dusk two or three miles from town on the road to Sheboygan. He was still tied to the rope, and was using a lot of bad language, while the gorilla was frequently reminding him with the whip of the real duties of his station, and the folly of discontent and rebellion. This was the last anybody ever saw of the Italian. The gorilla turned up the next day at a neighbouring town with his organ, but without anybody to take up the collection for him, and as the menagerie happened to be there the menagerie men captured him and put him back in his old cage, after having confiscated the organ. No one thought of making any search for Jewseppy, for, as I have said, he had never been naturalised, and had no vote, and there were not enough Italians in that part of the country to induce any one to take an interest in bringing them to the polls. It was generally believed that the gorilla had made away with Jewseppy, thinking that he could carry on the organ business to more advantage without him. It's always been my impression that if Jewseppy had lived he would have been cured of the desire to elevate the down-trodden, except, of course, in foreign countries. He was an excellent little man—enthusiastic, warm-hearted, and really believing in his talk about the rights of monkeys, and the

duty of elevating everybody. But there isn't the least doubt that he made a mistake when he tried to do justice to the gorilla."

From "Told by the Colonel," by permission of Messrs. McCURE & Co.

COMEDY.

• They parted, with clasps of hand
And kisses, and burning tears—
They met, in a foreign land,
After some twenty years.

Met as acquaintances meet,
Smilingly, tranquil-eyed—
Not even the least little beat
Of the heart, upon either side.

They chatted of this and that,
The nothings that make up life;
She in a Gainsborough hat,
And he in black for his wife.

Ah, what a comedy this!
Neither was hurt, it appears:
Yet once she had leaned to his kiss,
And once he had known her tears.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

From "The Sister's Tragedy," by permission of Messrs. MACMILLAN & Co.

THE HUMPBACKED MAIDEN.

A GERMAN STORY.

THERE lived once a poor woman with an only child, a little daughter, who was so pale and small that she was quite different from all other children. When this poor woman went out with her little girl, people would turn round to look after them and then whisper to each other. And when the little girl asked her mother why every one stared at them so, the mother would tell her, "Perhaps it is because you have such a pretty new frock," and so the child was satisfied. But when they got back home the mother would clasp her little one in her arms and cry, kissing her over and over again. "My child, my darling! what will become of thee when I am gone? No one knows what an angel she is; no, not even her father."

Not long after, the poor mother was taken suddenly ill, and on the ninth day she died. The father of this little girl was in despair; he threw himself on his dead wife, and vowed he would be buried with her. His friends, however, persuaded him to be comforted at last, and he consoled himself at the end of the year by taking another wife,

younger, prettier, and richer than the first; but, alas! not half so good.

As for the child, since her mother's death she had done nothing but sit in the window-seat and look up into the sky from morning till night, for nobody troubled themselves now to take her out. So she became paler than ever, and never grew a bit the whole year.

But when the new mother came, she said to herself, "Now, then, I shall go about again outside the town, into the merry sunshine and along the beautiful roads with the green hedges, where the lovely flowers and bushes grow, and where all the fine ladies and gentlemen walk." For this poor little girl lived in a narrow street into which the sun never shone, and it was only when you sat in the window-seat that a bit of blue sky could be seen, and then it was not bigger than a pocket-handkerchief.

The new mother began very soon to go out every day, morning and afternoon, and dressed herself always in a lovely dress of brilliant colours, which was much finer than any the old mother had ever worn—but she never took the little girl with her.

At last she took heart, this poor child, and begged hard to be allowed to go at least just once. But the new mother sharply told her "No!" for "what would the people say," she exclaimed, "if I were to show myself about with such an object? Why, bless the child, don't you know you're a perfect hunchback; and whoever heard of humpbacked children going out walking? they are always left at home!"

The little girl said not another word, but as soon as the new mother had gone out she jumped upon a chair before the looking-glass, and looked at herself a long time. Yes, she was humpbacked; there it was, a regular round hump between her shoulders, there was no mistake about it. She got quietly down, and mounted into her place in the window-seat, looking into the street beneath, and thinking of the days when that old mother had taken her out—and then she thought of her hump.

"I wonder what there is inside," she said to herself; "there must be something inside such a hump."

And the summer passed, and winter came, and the little girl was paler and thinner still; and at last, when the snowdrops began to peep from the hardened earth, the old mother came one night and told her how lovely the golden heavens above were, and in the morning the little maiden lay dead.

"Don't take on so, husband!" said the new mother; "it's much the best that could happen to such a child." But the husband said not a word, only shook his head mournfully, and thought of his dead wife and child.

As soon as they had buried her, an angel with wings of snow came flying from heaven and sat himself down close to the little grave, and knocked upon it gently as though it had been a door, and

presently the child came forth from her grave and listened as he told her he had come to take her home to her mother in heaven. But the little maiden looked shyly into the shining face, and asked if humpbacked children might go to heaven, since everything there was so fine and grand and beautiful.

"My little one," the angel answered, "thou art no longer humpbacked; and, striking his white hand across her shoulders, the old hump fell away like an empty nutshell, and—what was in it? Two beautiful swan-like angel's wings; and spreading them wide, as if she had been always used to flying, away she sped with her angel-guide through the blinding sunshine, on—on into the blue heavens above—and in the highest place of all sat that good mother of old, with arms outstretched towards her; and with one more sweep of her swan-like wings she flew straight to that old mother's breast, never to be parted more.

THE KING OF DENMARK'S RIDE.

I.

Word was brought to the Danish King,
(Hurry!)

That the love of his heart lay suffering,
And pined for the comfort his voice would bring;
(O! ride as though you were flying!)
Better he loves each golden curl
On the brow of that Scandinavian girl
Than his rich crown jewels of ruby and pearl;
And his Rose of the Isles lay dying!

II.

Thirty nobles saddled with speed;
(Hurry!)
Each one mounting a gallant steed
Which he kept for battle and days of need;
(O! ride as though you were flying!)
Spurs were struck in the foaming flank,
Worn-out chargers staggered and sank,
Bridles were slackened and girths were burst;
But ride as they would, the King rode first,
For his Rose of the Isles lay dying!

III.

His nobles are beaten, one by one;
(Hurry!)
They have fainted and faltered, and homeward
gone;
His little fair page now follows alone,
For strength and for courage trying!
The King looked back at that faithful child;
Wan was the face that answering smiled;
They passed the drawbridge with clattering din,
Then he dropped; and only the King rode in
Where his Rose of the Isles lay dying!

IV.

The King blew a blast on his bugle horn.

(Silence !)

No answer came ; but faint and forlorn
An echo returned on the cold grey morn,
Like the breath of a spirit sighing.
The castle portal stood grimly wide ;
None welcomed the King from that weary ride ;
For dead, in the light of the dawning day,
The pale sweet form of the welcomer lay,
Who had yearned for his voice while dying !

V.

The panting steed, with a drooping crest,

Stood weary.

The King returned from her chamber of rest,
The thick sobs choking in his breast ;
And, that dumb animal eyeing,
The tears gushed forth which he strove to check ;
He bowed his head on his charger's neck.
" O steed, that every nerve didst strain,
Dear steed, our ride hath been in vain
To the halls where my love lay dying ! "

HON. MRS. NORTON.

THAT LITTLE FRENCHMAN.

" Does anybody doubt my patriotism ? " asked the Colonel.

We all hastened to say that we should as soon doubt our own existence. Had he not made a speech no longer ago than last Fourth of July, showing that America was destined to have a population of 1,000,000,000, and that England was on the verge of extinction ? Had he not perilled his life in the cause of freedom, and was he not tireless in insisting that every Chinaman should be driven out of the United States ? If there ever was one American more patriotic than another it was the Colonel.

" Well, then," continued the speaker, " you won't misunderstand me when I say that the American railroad car is a hundred times more dangerous than these European compartment cars. In thirty years there have been just four felonious assaults in English railroad cars. There have been a few more than that in France, but not a single one in Germany. Now I admit that you are in no danger of being shot in an American car, unless, of course, two gentlemen happen to have a difficulty, and shoot wild, or unless the train is held up by train robbers, who are a little too free with their weapons. But I do say that the way in which we heat our cars with coal stoves kills thousands of passengers with pneumonia, and burns hundreds alive when the trains are wrecked.

" You see I've looked into this thing, and I've got the statistics down fine. I'm the only man I ever knew who ever had any trouble with a passenger while travelling in Europe, and I don't mind telling you about it, although it will be giving myself away. Kindly push me over those matches, will you ? These French cigars take a lot of fuel, and you have to encourage them with a match every three minutes if you expect them to burn.

" When I was over here in Paris ten years ago, there was a fellow here from Chicago who was trying to introduce American cars, and he gave me a pamphlet he had got up showing the horrors of the compartment system. It told of half a dozen murders, fifteen assaults, eleven cases of blackmail, and four cases in which a solitary traveller was shut up in a compartment with a lunatic—all these incidents having occurred on European railways. I was on my way to Egypt, and when I had read the pamphlet I began to wonder if I should ever manage to live through the railroad journey without being killed, or blackmailed, or lunaticked, or something of the kind. You see I believed the stories then, though I know now that about half of them were false.

" I took the express train—the Peninsular and Oriental they call it—from Paris about twelve o'clock one night. I went early to the train, and until just before we started I thought I was going to have the compartment to myself. All at once a man very much out of breath jumped in, the door was slammed, and we were off.

" I didn't like the looks of the fellow. He was a Frenchman, though of course that wasn't his fault. He was small but wiry looking, and his sharp black eyes were not the style of eyes that inspires me with confidence. Then he had no baggage except a small paper parcel, which was queer, considering that the train was a long-distance one. I kept a close watch on him for a while, thinking that he might be one of the professional lunatics that, according to the Chicago chap's pamphlet, are always travelling in order to frighten solitary passengers, but after a while I became so sleepy that I decided to lie down and take a nap, and my chances of being killed at the same time. Just then the man gets up and begins to talk to me in French.

" Now I needn't say that I don't speak French, nor any of those fool languages. Good American is good enough for me. One reason why these Europeans have been enslaved for centuries is that they can't make each other understand their views without shouting at the top of their lungs, and so bringing the police about their ears. But I did happen to know, or thought I did, the French word for going to sleep, and so I thought I would just leave it at this chap so that he would understand that I didn't require his conversation. I have always found that if you talk to a Frenchman in English very

slowly and impressively he will get the hang of what you say. That is, if he isn't a cabman. You can't get an idea into a French cabman's head unless you work it in with a club. So I said to the fellow in the train: "My friend! I haven't any time to waste in general conversation. I'm going to sleep, and I advise you to do the same. You can tell me all about your institutions and your revolutions and things in the morning." And then I hove in the French word 'cochon,' which I supposed meant something like 'Now I lay me down to sleep.'

"The fellow staggered back as if I had hit him, and then he began to sling the whole French language at me. I calculate that he could have given Bob Ingersoll fifty points in a hundred and beaten him, and, as you know, Bob is the ablest vituperator now in the business. The Frenchman kept on raving and getting madder and madder every minute, and I saw that there wasn't the least doubt that he was a dangerous lunatic.

"I stood up and let him talk for a while, occasionally saying 'non comprenny' and 'cochon,' just to soothe him, but presently he came close to me and shook his fist in my face. This was too much, so I took him by the shoulders and slammed him down in a corner seat, and said, "You sit there, sonny, and keep quiet, or you'll end by getting me to argue with you." But the minute I let go of him he bounced up again as if he was made of india-rubber, and came at me just as a terrier will come at a horse, pretending that he is going to tear him into small pieces. So I slammed him down into his corner again, and said, 'This foolishness has gone far enough, and we'll have it stopped right here. Didn't you hear me say cochon? I'm going to cochon, and you'd better cochon, too, or I'll make you.'

"This time he jumped up as soon as I had let go of him and tried to hit me. Of course I didn't want to hit so small a chap, letting alone that he knew no more about handling his fists than the angel Gabriel, so I just took and twisted his arms behind his back and tied them with a shawl strap. Then, seeing as he showed a reprehensible disposition to kick, I put another strap around his legs, and stretched him on the seat with his bundle under his head. But kindness was thrown away on that Frenchman. He tried to bite me, and not content with spitting like a cat, he set up a yell that was the next thing to the locomotive whistle, and rolling off the seat tried to kick at me with both legs.

"I let him exercise himself for a few minutes, while I got my hairbrush and some twine out of my bag. Then I put him back on the seat, gagged him with the handle of the hairbrush, and lashed him to the arm of the seat, so that he couldn't roll off. Then I offered him a drink, but he shook his head, not having any manners, in spite of what people say about the politeness of Frenchmen.

Having secured my own safety, and made the lunatic reasonably comfortable, I turned in and went to sleep. I must have slept very sound, for although the train stopped two or three times during the night I never woke up until we stopped for breakfast about eight o'clock the next morning. I sat up and looked at my lunatic, who was wide awake and glaring at me. I wished him good morning, for I couldn't bear any grudge against a crazy man, but he only rolled his eyes and seemed madder than ever, so I let him lie and got out of the train.

"Two policemen were walking up and down the platform, and I took one of them by the arm and led him to the car, explaining what had happened. I don't know whether he understood or not, but he pretended that he didn't.

"As soon as he saw the lunatic there was a pretty row. He called two more policemen, and, after they had ungagged the fellow, they hauled us both before a magistrate, who had his office in the railroad station. At least he acted like a magistrate, although he wore the same uniform as the policemen. Here the fellow I had travelled with was allowed to speak first, and he charged me, as I afterwards found, with having first insulted, and then assaulted him. He said he rather thought I was a lunatic, but at any rate he must have my blood. Then an interpreter was sent for, and I told my story, but I could see that nobody believed me.

"'Accused,' said the magistrate, very sternly, 'you called this gentleman a pig. What was your motive?'

"Of course I swore that I had never called him a pig; that I hardly knew half a dozen words of his infamous language, and that I had used only one of those. Being asked what it was, I said 'cochon.' And then that idiot ordered me to be locked up.

"By rare good luck there happened to be an American Secretary of Legation on the train. You know him. It was Hiram G. Trask, of West Centreopolis. He recognised me, and it didn't take him very long to explain the whole affair. It seems that the Frenchman had asked me if I objected to smoking, and when I tried to tell him that we ought to go to sleep, I said 'cochon,' which means pig, instead of 'couchons,' which was the word I ought to have used. He was no more of a lunatic than a Frenchman naturally is, but he was disgusted at being carried two hundred miles beyond his destination, which was the first stopping-place beyond Paris, and I don't know as I blame him very much. And then, too, he seemed to feel that his dignity had been some ruffled by being gagged and bound. However, both he and the policemen listened to reason, and the man agreed to compromise on my paying him damages, and withdrawing the assertion that he was morally or physically a pig. The affair cost considerable, but it taught me

a lesson, and I have quit believing that you can't travel in a European railroad car without being locked up with a lunatic or murderer. I admit that the whole trouble was due to my foolishness. When the Frenchman began to make a row, I ought to have killed him, and dropped the body out of the door, instead of fooling with him half the night and trying to make him comfortable. But we can't always command presence of mind or see just where our duty lies at all times."

By permission of Messrs. McClure & Co.

FIGURES OF SPEECH.

I.

AN, still even stranger's lips renew
The magic of your name!
Last night, when some one spoke of you,
I felt my blood turn flame.

II.

Your fair friend said: "Though so besought,
And so admired, how free
From vanity, how pure in thought,
And true in deed, is she!

III.

"Her soul's ev'n fairer than her face.
Do you not think so too?"
And with beatified grimace
I lied, and said, "I do."

OWEN MEREDITH.

By permission of LADY LYTTON.

THE SISTERS.

ANNIE and Rhoda, sisters twain,
Woke in the night to the sound of rain,
The rush of wind, the ramp and roar
Of great waves climbing a rocky shore.
Annie rose up in her bedgown white,
And looked out into the storm and night.
"Hush and hearken!" she cried in fear,
"Hearest thou nothing, sister dear?"
"I hear the sea, and the splash of rain,
And roar of the north east hurricane.
Get thee back to the bed so warm,
No good comes of watching a storm.
What is it to thee, I fain would know,
That waves are roaring and wild winds blow?
No lover of thine's afloat to miss
The harbour lights on a night like this."
"But I heard a voice cry out my name,
Up from the sea on the wind it came;
Twice and thrice have I heard it call,
And the voice is the voice of Estwick Hall!"
On her pillow the sister tossed her head,
"Hall of the Heron is safe," she said.
In the tautest schooner that ever swam,
He rides at anchor in Anisquam.

And if in peril from swamping sea
Or lee-shore rocks, would he call on thee?"
But the girl heard only the wind and tide
And wringing her small white hands, she cried;
"O sister Rhoda, there's something wrong;
I hear it again, so loud and long.
"Annie! Annie," I hear it call,
And the voice is the voice of Estwick Hall!"
Up sprang the elder with eyes aflame,
"Thou liest! He never would call thy name!
If he did, I would pray the wind and sea
To keep him for ever from thee and me!"
Then out of the sea blew a dreadful blast,
Like the cry of a dying man it passed.
The young girl hushed on her lips a groan,
But through her tears a strange light shone,—
The solemn joy of her heart's release
To own and cherish its love and peace.
"Dearest!" she whispered, under breath,
"Life was a lie, but true is death.
The love I hid from myself away
Shall crown me now in the light of day.
My ears shall never to wooer list,
Never by lover my lips be kissed.
Sacred to thee am I henceforth,
Thou in heaven, and I on earth!"
She came and stood by her sister's bed;
"Hall of the Heron is dead," she said.
The wind and the waves their work have done,
We shall see him no more beneath the sun.
Little will rock that heart of thine,
It loved him not with a love like mine.
I, for his sake, were he but here,
Could hem and broider thy bridal gear,
Though hands should tremble and eyes be wet,
And stitch for stitch in my heart be set.
And now my soul with his soul wed;
Thine the living, and mine the dead!"

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

LOVE'S LETTER-BOX.

BELONG there, in the orchard,
A hundred years ago,
The blossom bloomed as sweetly,
The sun as brightly shone.
And once in the warm spring sunshine
The hollow walnut-tree
Leaned down with its whispering branches,
And told its tale to me.
'Twas all of a dainty maiden.
With eyes of the skies' own blue,
Who trusted the gnarled old walnut
With words for the lover true.
And whenever she dropped a letter
In the hollow trunk and grey,
"Oh, walnut-tree, keep my secret,
She would kiss his leaves and say.

But, late in the waning summer,
 One last little letter lay
 Unclaimed in the old tree's bosom,
 Desolate day by day.

He came not, and still he came not,
 And never a word she spake
 As she stole through the flowering grasses
 And wept as her heart would break.

There lay the small white letter,
 That the old tree held so fast,
 And the maiden's cheeks grew paler
 As the weary weeks went past.

Then the old tree questioned the blackbird,
 And the swallow slim and gay,
 And they said, "He is sleeping, sleeping,
 On a sea-shore far away."

"His face is as white as a lily's
 As he lieth alone—apart,
 With a sword-hilt in his fingers,
 And a sword-thrust through his heart"

The lassie is dead and gone, dear,
 Dead with that summer's dew,
 But her tale that the old tree told me
 I tell it again to you.

HELEN J. WOOD.

From "Sylvia's Journal" for January 1893.

AN OBJECT LESSON.

THIS must have happened eighty years ago, at the very least. Every one at Pentreath has known the story from childhood; but, so far as I can gather, the last survivor of the congregation that heard the sermon of which I am to tell you was old Cap'n Cundy, who died, an old, old man, six years come Feasten time.

Eighty years ago Pentreath would have been described by a plain-spoken man as a mere collection of hovels. It was but a single straggling street, set down in the midst of a barren moorland near the sea; while here and there, on either side, the dwelling of some man less sociable than his fellows stood apart.

The thatch-roofed cottages had rude cob-walls of yellow clay, mixed with chopped straw and bad mortar; and some of them had been whitewashed. Over the thatch, to guard against the violence of the wind that beat in from the Atlantic, great stones were slung by hempen cords. To leeward of the village a row of pig-sties, with black tarred roofs, leaned against a rough grey hedge of granite, whereon a few torn tamarisks shivered.

Of the people, some were farm-labourers, and some did a little fishing. Others were miners, who went to work usually at the age of seven,

and almost invariably died before they had reached forty. If they chanced to live longer it was only in the majority of cases, because they had been blinded by an explosion of blasting-powder, or maimed by the falling-away of a badly timbered shaft, before the endless ladders they had to climb in an atmosphere foul with the breath of generations and the reek of the powder, and the stolen hours when they "touched pipe" and lounged about—dripping wet, and sweating with recent labour—in wet and draughty "levels," had destroyed their lungs.

But no one at Pentreath did more work than would procure for him the bare necessities of life. The miners, indeed, could only do this much if they worked for a fixed wage; if they were "on tribute" they worked only four days a week, lest, when at the month's end they were found to have earned a comparatively large sum, the rate of payment should be reduced.

But luxuries were still not quite impossible, since most of them had to do with the smuggling. Sometimes, too, the Lord sent a wreck.

Now, for all this—despite the hardness of the lives they led and the crudeness of their notions—they were a kindly and well-meaning people, and regular in their attendance at chapel.

Many years before this there had come into Pentreath at the quiet close of a summer day a soberly attired and dusty stranger. Eli Heberden, the stranger in question, was one of Wesley's preachers, and the Pentreath men made it a duty, when they had learned his mission, to offer him a foretaste of the pains of martyrdom.

But Eli Heberden's arm was as strong as his faith. It was found impossible to silence him or to drive him from the village, and after multitudinous troubles—petulant, spasmodic outbursts of a fire that had been tramped into ashes—he succeeded in setting up a flourishing little church there.

Finally a cottage was purchased, and converted by voluntary labour of the villagers into a chapel. It was here that their descendants were gathered one afternoon in autumn long ago.

The door stood open, as if to invite the entrance of passers by; and now and again a duck that, caught in passing an unexpected glimpse of human faces quacked loudly once and was gone across the common. Cundy was sitting in the almost comfortable pew at the very back of the chapel (under the choir-gallery) which his father occupied in virtue of his position of chapel-steward. He could see, therefore, right across the sombre moorland, whence the dull glow of the heather had well-nigh faded.

Over this moorland the preacher was to come that afternoon; but no human figure was visible as yet upon the winding pathway, that gleamed with long pools of newly fallen rain. The sky

was filled with windy cloud-rack. Every detail of the landscape was clear and definitely outlined, but lonely and remote. The eye marked each white spar in the black patches of the waste where the young gorse had not yet hidden the scars made by the fires of the last swaling-time.

Most of the congregation were accustomed to such disappointments as this. They sat on patiently, while Cundy's father leaned forward from his pew and discussed with another of the "leaders" the advisability of ceasing to wait for the preacher and starting at once with a prayer-meeting. Only a child, not yet inured to the hard, straight-backed forms and the long necessity of stillness, shifted sometimes uneasily in its seat.

Finally the steward stepped to the door to take one last look across the moorland. Just at this moment a dark figure appeared on the narrow pathway, and moved rapidly towards the chapel. The steward looked back with a reassuring nod at his colleague.

Evidently the preacher was coming at last.

But though the chapel door was certainly the bourne towards which the steps of the new-comer were directed, it was soon seen that he was not the person they expected. As he drew near the steward saw that he was a young man and straight. The preacher was old and bowed. Then he noted that the stranger was dressed in worldly garb which had no hint of sanctity.

It was not the preacher.

Yet the young man advanced as with well-defined purpose towards the chapel. His clear-cut features were very pale; his eyes keen and passionlessly stern. He seemed to move inevitably, yet without eagerness, with no reluctance, towards an appointed goal; and as he reached the spot where the steward stood, he said in clear and level tones:

"This is Pentreath Chapel, I think?"

"Iss, sure," replied the steward. "Will'ee come in! Praicher edn' come yet, but we'm goin' to hold a prayer-mittin' dreckly-minute."

"I am the preacher," said the stranger, coldly, and before the other had recovered from the surprise of this announcement he had entered the pulpit.

The people had turned in their seats when they heard voices and the sound of feet. A stir of interest went through them as the substitute walked up the aisle and entered the little box of a chapel.

He bowed for a moment over the big Bible, then gave out the first hymn, reading it aloud, verse by verse.

Now, during the singing of this hymn, Cundy (though a young child at this time) noticed that a certain Hendra, now landlord of the village "Kiddlewink," but previously employed in a big inn twenty miles away, was hideously frightened

at something. His jaw had fallen. He stared at the preacher as one might stare at a man, known, certainly to be dead, that walked still among the living and passed for one of them.

Then suddenly he recovered.

Still staring at the preacher he began to grin, as at some cunning deceit of which he himself was the only unduped spectator. Then only did the preacher return his stare, with a long look that, to the child, had no meaning or emotion in it.

Hendra ceased to grin, and was strangely subdued.

Then came the opening prayer. It was very long and very earnest. The little chapel rang with the responses and ejaculations of the men.

To a stranger, their breathless gasps and sobbings would have been revolting; but there was something grimly comic in the embarrassment of the voice wherein a new convert of mature years, brought to a close the interjected "Glory be to God!" which he had begun as if in bold avowal of his changed state. He seemed oppressed, in the midst of the words, with a sudden sense of shouting in a vast hall before an infinite invisible audience.

But all these cries grew silent, there was even what might have been a murmur of revolt against the preacher, when he seemed to pray for the soul of a highwayman hanged only the day before, as for the parents who had loved him.

During the second hymn, however, amid the joyful noise of "serpent," fiddle, and bassoon, and the concerted fervour of a hundred hearty voices, the congregation forgot a certain tremor which had passed through them as the stranger prayed for the soul of the dead thief.

But when the lessons were read (and the first lesson was the story of Absalom's wickedness and death) he prayed again. And again he prayed for the soul of the miserable youth who had been hanged for highway robbery.

Then came the sermon.

The text was taken from that same chapter in Samuel which had formed the lesson. The preacher sketched the career of the beautiful and wicked prince: how he entered upon life amidst the happiest circumstances that could nurse a good and great man; how he fell to all contemptible and hateful crime; how, dying a death that was God's judgment made visible to men, he brought black shame and the bitterness of grief to the hearts of them that loved him more than life.

To the villagers this could never again be a mere story in a book. The preacher made the history live for them; and there were some that trembled among those that heard him.

Then, solemnly, without emotion, he told them the life-story of another young man, the highwayman of whose death they had been told.

He claimed no personal knowledge of the man, yet all who heard him knew certainly that he had known him well. He described him at school, a leader of his fellows in all that called for skill and daring, yet himself easily led. He told how the boy's parents worshipped him, hoping, before their time was come to die, to see in his successes the great reward of their life's toil and labour.

Then he told of the boy's first sin that, being undiscovered, led to others; how he entered upon life, nevertheless, with all promise for a splendid manhood. Then came his crime that was discovered. The preacher told how the young man feared to stay and bear the penalty of his act—and in his fear there was, perhaps, a little shame at the thought of his father's shame: how he fled away and was lost to his friends.

For awhile, said the preacher, it went ill with the fugitive, and at last he was forced to turn highwayman. Beginning as a common thief of the roadside, he gradually improved his position by his thefts, and for two years, knowing the country thoroughly, and all the secret hiding-places of the moorland, he met with unbroken success.

His name became a terror to the wealthy. He gained a reputation for desperate, unflinching courage, though scarce needing in his extremest undertakings to display more of that quality than would have served to cover a poltroon's cowardice.

But at last came the inevitable end.

He met a man who, robbed of his money, must lose also his good name. He was wounded, captured, and condemned.

Then the preacher described the man's abject horror as he lay in the cell whence he was to issue only to die. He was young still, loved his life, and loved his fellows; they were adamant against him, coldly resolved on his death.

Then he pictured the last night of sleepless agony, the passion of hopeless resistance that stirred the prisoner to madness, the mute horror that fell on him as the dawn crept inexorably into the rainy sky.

"Think of it, my friends," the preacher said. "He was the one hope whereby his parents lived, and that hope seemed not out of reason. And there was other love than theirs. Now——"
A frenzy shook him. His voice rose to a shriek.

"Look!" he cried, and all eyes were turned to that side-wall of the chapel towards which he pointed.

There, in the growing shadows, against the pallor of the walls, a great black gallows stood. A dead man hung from the beam, and for awhile they looked at the vision in horror; for the face of the dead man hanging there was the face of the man who had preached to them that day. That awful face, the glazed eyes, mocked them for a moment.

Then, as the vision faded away from the wall, they turned shuddering and terrified towards the pulpit.

The preacher had gone.

H. D. LOWRY.

*From "Wreckers and Methodists,"
by permission of the Author.*

A DAY OF REST.

IN matters of doctrine, there is commonly a singular lack of agreement, even among our simple village folk; a Wesleyan Chapel can hardly be erected, for example, until you have provided for the seceders it will breed from time to time by the erection of a Chapel of the United Methodists. But on one point there is unanimity: not a man of all the fishermen of Trewavas would dream of going out on Sunday in the pursuit of his profession. It is one of the laws of nature—of the laws perhaps laid down by Eli Heberden, an early follower of the Wesleys on our Cornish coast—that he who has not saved two days' provender by Saturday must needs go starving on the Monday. But the law exists only for natives of the coast; the East-country fishers ignore it altogether.

The men of Trewavas have a natural difficulty in seeing that these stranger-folk have any right at all to reap the harvest of the sea in their neighbourhood. That they should fish on Sundays is deemed an intolerable wrong; and though the strangers continue to profit (as men do) by their lack of restraining principle, they have not been permitted for many years past to land the Sunday's take at Trewavas. They used to do so, but patience is a food whereat the stomach rises with surprising suddenness after a while. There came a Monday morning when the men of Trewavas saw eight boat-loads of fish, captured during Sunday night, being landed under their very eyes. They could stand it no longer. All that day gulls swarmed in the little harbour, and thereafter the place reeked of decaying fish. So that nowadays, the East-countrymen deem it wise to land the Sunday's catch elsewhere. And if the tradesmen of the place grumble that the victualling of these boats is likewise done nowadays in other parts, the fishermen can do more than politely regret the necessity of the coincidence.

Jan Chewallock (to whom I owe the history that follows) is always careful to emphasise the fact that Sam'l Tregerbyn was a foreigner. Trewavas Consols is a mine which in its time has yielded copper to the value of somewhere like half a million. It made many modest fortunes; then the copper gave out and the "bal" was "knacked." The copper often does give out after you have sunk to a certain depth; but if you have the courage to go still deeper, 'tis possible the

mine may "cut rich" again. Only it will now be tin that is produced.

Trewavas Consols had been knacked for many years, and there was scarce a miner left in all the district, when the facts I have related impressed themselves upon the mind of a certain capitalist of the locality. By his exertions a syndicate was presently formed, to take over the deserted workings of, the famous "bal" and work them for tin. Men swarmed from all parts of the country, seeking for employment in the new mine; among them came Sam'l Tregerbyn, a carpenter.

He had no acquaintances in the village, but it soon became evident that he was a person of considerable enterprise. He built a greenhouse in his leisure hours, and in a year or two was getting fabulous prices for his grapes, which ripened in May. Also he "tealed" in his bit of potato-ground all sorts of outlandish delicacies—kail, asparagus—which came to maturity early on the sunny slopes above the sea, and sold readily at magnificent prices. So that when Trewavas Consols was abandoned again, the lode having taken to playing hide-and-seek with a success that defied the dowsing-rod, Sam'l Tregerbyn did not quit the neighbourhood with the rest of the minehands. He continued to occupy the cottage, doing whatever jobs of carpentry came to hand, and devoting much of his time to the cultivation of his "tatey-ground" and of his green-house, now greatly enlarged.

The natives looked upon him with a wondering curiosity; he came from foreign parts, and beyond a doubt was saving money.

Now it chanced, upon a day when he had been some two years in the village, that Sam'l Tregerbyn was at work in the smoking-room of the Crown and Feathers, the chief hotel in Trenobbin, a watering-place whereof Trewavas forms a sort of suburb. Two visitors were smoking an after-breakfast pipe, and Sam'l heard them discussing with mild indignation (for it was Monday) the fact that no fish had been provided at the morning meal. Granting it was right and proper that people should go to church on Sunday, they still considered that a mere matter of religious scruples was an altogether insufficient excuse for the absence of soles at their breakfast on Monday.

—Sam'l went on very quietly with his work, but he listened attentively, and the conversation of the visitors sank deep into his mind. There were two big hotels in Trenobbin, and a good half of its householders had lodgers in the summer. All the visitors, Sam'l realised, would be desiring fish at breakfast-time; and there was a fortune waiting for the man who should be bold enough to snatch his opportunity.

Sam'l was not entirely ignorant of the fishing, though his professional interests lay in quite another direction. He was curious, in the first place, as to all approved methods of money-making.

Further, it pleased him, when he was not actually earning money by labour at the bench or in his garden, to save expense by "whiffing" for a cheap and wholesome meal in Trewavas Bay. Also he had made a very serviceable boat in moments of leisure, out of a dilapidated structure, which had been sold to him for something less than its value as firewood.

Upon these facts he meditated as he proceeded with his work, and when it was finished he determined to speak to the proprietor of the hotel. Mr. Pendaray, was not a proud man; there was no detail in the management of the hotel that escaped his close attention. He lived—I believe that in the end he died—with his shirt-sleeves rolled up.

"Like to get fish o' Monday mornin'?" he exclaimed. "Of course we should; but there's never none to be had for love or money. Ah! Sam'l, Sam'l, 'tis well to be a fisherman, or a carpenter, an' able to rest Sundays. But, there, 'tis ordered as it is, I s'pose, an' we must toil on, though some people be fine an' hard to please."

Sam'l considered this matter throughout the week. Then, on Saturday, he went out "whiffing" for mackerel that should serve as bait. Already he had conveyed his boat to a quiet portion of the beach, and on Sunday evening, just when the fishermen had entered their chapels, he pushed off from the beach and stole away along the coast. Presently he anchored the boat and threw out a couple of hand-lines.

To begin with, he caught a strangely constructed fish, clothed brilliantly in orange and bright blue. This was a useless "cuckoo-fish," and was straightway killed and flung overboard. More than once, being unaccustomed to the occupation, Sam'l mistook a chance tug of the tide upon a line for the struggles of a hooked fish; and there was but little restraint in the language that came from him at each of these "watery hauls." At other times, when the line had hung for several minutes undisturbed and loose, he drew it up, only to find that the hooks and lead were wildly entangled with the main line.

These were but the natural consequences of his defective skill, and in their despite it was evident the gods were set upon ruining him, for upon the whole he was amazingly successful. He caught some pollack, half a dozen great cod, and finally, shifting his position, he got over a shoal of whiting, and had for a long time to draw up one line as fast as he had flung the other overboard rebaited. All his mackerel bait was used up at last, and he had to cut up some of the whiting. It was three o'clock in the morning when he returned to Trewavas, and it took him a good half-hour to put his boat away and get the fish conveyed to his cottage.

He lit a fire of driftwood and of fragments gathered in the fir-plantation above his cottage, and soon had made himself a cup of tea. He had

set forth upon his expedition with a mind not wholly made up. Had his fishing been unsuccessful he would undoubtedly have relinquished the undertaking. But, as it was, his contempt for the fishermen was vastly increased; he was convinced that their resolute virtue was but intolerance under another name, and as he looked upon his spoils he had all the exultation of a man who has done a good action and knows that the vulgar will surely abuse him therefore. He slept for an hour or two, and then transferred his fish to the donkey-cart wherein he was wont to convey his garden-stuff to the place of sale. Then he started for Trenobbin.

There were some that eyed him curiously upon the road, but none dare to interfere, or even to question. And at the Crown and Feathers and the Imperial they were delighted to buy his fish, so that there was no need to look for customers elsewhere.

"You ought to have bin in our trade, Sam'l," said Mr. Pendray, as they were settling the price to be paid for the fish. "Money? Well, you 'an't got no need to stare; but 'tis terrible wearin' to open Sundays as well as week-a-days, an' never no chance to go to church. Want a man that was born for it, it do, and born for it you was, simmin' to me."

He was glad enough to get the fish, but he had a great contempt for this man who would work seven days a week when not driven thereto by the fear that others, did he rest upon the Sabbath, would out-do him in his trade. Moreover, Sam'l had no right—he, a carpenter, a market-gardener—to interfere at all in the fishing. But these were Mr. Pendray's private views, and they were not allowed to affect his business relations. A man might buy fish on a Monday morning and remain without reproach; he did not want (if Sam'l would fish on Sundays) to lose his share of the take. So Sam'l returned to the village confirmed in his resolve of evil-doing, and full of contemptuous disregard for the scruples of his neighbours.

He had scarce put the donkey into the shed that did duty as stables when the news of his treachery began to circulate in the village, creating there a vast sensation. The man was certainly a notorious foreigner, but he had surely lived long enough in Trewavas to have learned the customs of the place.

"I can't see what call he've got to meddle with the fishin', anyway," said old 'Lijah Gooninis, as he bent his grey head over a tangled line. "Makin' a fortune, so they do say, where you an' I might grow a few 'taties; an' bur'als as common as chris'nins, with he makin' every one o' the coffins. An' coffins, mind, edn' like another trade. 'Tis ready money in coffins. There's folk'll live forty year in debt, an' never look to pay. But when they come to die 'tis cash down wi' them. So any person might think that Sam'l could afford

to leave we have the fishin' to ourselves. But if a must fishey, leave en fishey fair. I aren't a young man 't all; but I can't mind, an' my father couldn' mind, that's dead these twenty year, a time when Trewavas boats went out 'pon Sunday. Not if we was starvin'!"

There was immediately a chorus of indignation, and some of the younger men looked dangerous. But nothing came of it. Sam'l moved for the rest of the week in an atmosphere of scorn; but, then, he had never been popular, and he was aware at this time of no remarkable change in his environment.

On the following Sunday he went out again to his unrighteous toil, and once again the gods maddened him with a splendid take of fish. During the week that followed there was much talk concerning his evil-doing. There were some among the elders who felt that this misguided foreigner must be stopped for his soul's sake. Others—and it was Hannibal Curtis who found the words that should express their common view—held opinions which were the same in effect, though less unimpeachably expressed:

"I woul'dn' give tuppence for the soul of en—you may depend it edn' worth savin.' But he got to stop fishin' Sundays, I reck'n."

But all this talk meant little enough to Sam'l; if he chose to go out on Sundays they could scarce hold him back. A row would be unseemly on that day, and they, moreover, would be in chapel at the hour of his departure. So they were content with hiding his oars and dragging his boat to the very top of the beach. It was low water on Sunday evening, yet when they came out after the service they found that Sam'l had somehow got the boat down to the water's edge and embarked upon his journey. It was a beautiful summer evening, and they watched the stars come out across the sea as they lounged upon the quay and talked of the foreigner. Then at last they went home. But there were two men that had no sleep that night. Jan will forgive me if I tell you that their names were Jan Chewallock and Hannibal Curtis.

Sam'l had developed by this time into a fairly skilful fisherman, but upon this last night of his enterprise the fates were dead against him. "Cuckoo-fish" he caught by the dozen, and this death they died was violent and swift. He caught a couple of cod, a pollack, and a gurnard or two. For the rest, a shoal of chad seemed to pursue him all night long. They played with his hooks, tore off his bait, and generally befooled him. Of course he caught them in large numbers, but one doesn't eat chad eagerly, and Mr. Pendray (as Sam'l knew) was not the man to purchase goods of an inferior class. He fished on and on, until at last his patience gave out and he made for the beach. Down went the sail, and he heard the *slush* of the boat's keel as it ploughed up the soft

wet sand. And then, for the first time, he caught sight of two tall figures standing statuesque upon the beach, and having each of them a great wicker mand at his side.

Sam'l stared at them with angry surprise.

"Mornin', Sam'l," said Jan Chewallock. "Been fishin', have 'ee?"

Sam'l was silent.

"Mornin', Sam'l," said Hannibal Curtis. "What fashion sport have 'ee had?"

"Wha's that got to do wi' thee?" cried Sam'l, angrily, detecting a certain irony in their suave questionings.

Chewallock stepped forward swiftly and laid his hand upon the boat's bows. With one great pull he drew it in upon the harder sand. Then he seated himself with great deliberation on the bows, bent forward, and looked up calmly into Sam'l's face.

"Well," he said, "'tis like this here. Me an' Hannibal been waitin' here all night, purpose for to have speech with you first thing when you come in. I dunna where you come from, but Trewavas folk always been great ones for to read their Bible, and there they do find it, 'Six days shalt thou labour, but the seventh day thou shalt do no manner o' work whatsoever.' P'raps you never heard tell o' that, but we do hold by it here to Trewavas, an' so did they that was before us. 'Tis fifteen years since they East-countrymen had their fish thraved into Trewavas harbour; an' if they Jews an' Gentiles was punished, shall the stranger within our gates be left to go free?"

Here he paused for a reply. Sam'l glared at him. Hannibal turning the quid in his mouth, broke in with a judicial, "No, sure."

Chewallock bowed gently. Then he continued:

"You been workin' when we was restin'," he said.

"You must rest while we be workin'." A few chads won't come to much, but 'tis a pity to waste even poorish meat. We thought first to throw them into the harbour, but now we're decided to sell them for so much as they'll bring, an' give the money to the chapel. An' you be goin' to take a day's rest, Sam'l. You'll be killin' yourself, workin' day and night, an' every day, my son."

Then he turned to Hannibal. "Where's that maund?" he said.

Hannibal passed him the maund, and he stepped into the boat. Upon the instant Sam'l struck at him wildly.

"Dear, dear," said Jan in tones of pity and surprise. "Lost his temper, seemingly."

Then he made a sudden move towards Sam'l. At that moment, he assures me, the boat gave a great lurch—possibly because Sam'l had moved quickly to defend himself against anticipated violence.

At any rate, Sam'l lost his balance, and fell from the boat into the shallow water, where he lay for an instant flat upon his back. A little wave had

flung itself against and over him before he had risen to gain the drier sand; and for every drop of brine that fell from him he had a wild creaked oath. His blasphemy had no rotundity. It was the screech of a spiteful and impotent wrath. For Sam'l was angry.

"Never mind, boy," said Chewallock. "Salt water won't do 'ee no harm, an' it won't take 'ee long to dry—in the sun." These last three words were spoken with a curious emphasis. "Hold en a minute, Hannibal," he continued, stooping down to collect the fish into his maund.

"Wha's the hurry with 'ee, Sam'l," said Hannibal, barring the progress of his victim. "Wait a minute, my son, and we'm goin' to walk up along with 'ee."

Sam'l struggled to get past.

"Leave me be!" he said, angrily. "'Teden' no business of yours what I d' with my own time."

"Dannaw 'bout that, neither," answered Hannibal, unperturbed. "Howsomever, you got to wait." And as Sam'l made a last desperate effort to escape he tripped him up. Sam'l fell heavily on the sand as Jan Chewallock pitched the last of the chads into the maund.

"Must we make two journeys of it," said Jan, "or are 'ee goin' to come 'long with we, all peaceable-like?"

Sam'l gave no answer but a curse, and so the two avengers of broken tradition picked him up bodily and carried him, struggling, ejaculating most unrestrainedly, across the beach to the little quay. There was a granite pillar there in front of the low wall under which the elders gather when the sun shines on their leisure. Reaching this point they halted. Some ropes lay on the ground ready to hand, and in a very few minutes Sam'l was most securely tied to the pillar. The two men stood back and contemplated their handiwork. Sam'l was now fairly "screechin' wi' rage."

"Run down and fetch up they chads," said Jan Chewallock, "an' fix up his boat for en." Then he turned to Sam'l Tregerbyn.

"Speakin' as man to man," he said, "I shouldn' make all that there noise if I was you. There's no need for 'ee to call the neighbours down: they'll all be here time enough to see 'ee, without any callin'. For there you'm goin' to sit, Sam'l, till six o'clock at night, which was the time when you started out yesterday. 'Tis a pretty place, sure 'nough!" He looked at Sam'l enviously. "There you'm goin' to sit all day, with the sun shinin' 'pon 'ee, an' all in the lewth."

Hannibal Curtis came back at this juncture, bearing the fish for which Sam'l had sacrificed so much.

"Put they down 'longside of en," said Jan, "an' now, sinne, we might so well go up an' get a bit o' meat (food). So long to 'ee, Sam'l. We'm comin' back directly."

It was not long before the villagers began to move about. The men came down immediately to the quay; the women when they had got the first instalment of their washing upon the lines, or laid out on the great patches of tall S. John's wort and clambering ice-plant that covered the low walls of their gardens. Sam'l, dragged and enraged, was still bound firmly to the pillar. On either side stood his captors, Jan explaining to all comers the true significance of the spectacle.

"Sam'l, here, been out all night fishin', so now he've got to rest a bit. These here's the fish he caught, and if you d' mind to buy them the moneys to go for the new harmonium up to chapel."

The fish sold rapidly and at prices without precedent in the history of the village. No one thought of breakfast for a long time. The children played around Sam'l; the elders stood and moralised concerning his evil ways and his present ignominy. But these things were not all he had to bear. There was a certain M'Jane Mitchell upon whom Sam'l had cast eyes of love in the rare intervals of rest from money-getting. He had given her arum lilies, for a child's funeral, at a season when the blooms were fetching almost their weight in the silver coinage of the realm. He had even taken to attending the chapel occasionally, in order to stare at her.

And M'Jane came down that morning to the scene of his humiliation, and laughed and talked, her knitting in her hand, with one of the youngest and poorest of the fishermen—young 'Lijah Gooninis. Sam'l had already learned by sad experience to hate this youth; but now he was bitterer than ever, for they did not hide the fact that it was at his plight they laughed, of his discomfiture they talked and jested. Finally, it was 'Lijah who hit upon the happy idea of printing on a big board with a tar-brush, the one word "Resting": it was he who laid the board at Sam'l's feet.

There was fresh laughter at this quaint conceit, but gradually the greater part of the assembled people drifted off to their accustomed toil. At first Sam'l was horribly wet and cold. But the sun beat down upon him, and his wet clothes dried and stiffened. He grew hot, murderously hot, and his throat burned for lack of water. He was hungry, too, and no one of the villagers gave a thought to him, save as a thing to laugh at in an idle interval of the day.

He was inspected curiously, about mid-day, by a couple of tourists. He heard them laugh consumedly behind his back as they extracted from the children the reasons for his being so curiously situated, the meaning of the inscription on the board. They gave the children coppers. The flies maddened him as the day grew hot. Worst of all, old 'Lijah Gooninis came with certain other grey-beards and talked at him, sitting in the sun against the low wall of granite.

In the afternoon the boats went out, but Sam'l was still a prisoner. The children played around him, and the hours dragged on with slowness ineffable. Presently, upon the stroke of six, a foot-step fell upon his ear. It was Jan Chewallock, who had taken the opportunity of doing a day's needful work about his house.

"Most rested, are 'ee Sam'l?" he inquired, kindly.

Sam'l's answer was inarticulate, if eloquent.

"They fishes of yours sold splendid," continued his tormentor. "Two an' fourpence ha'penny they fetched, an' I gave the money to 'Lijah Gooninis, he bein' chapel steward. It won't be long before we've got the harmonium if the money do come in in this fashion."

He bent down and untied the knots.

"Edn' it 'most ten-time with 'ee?" he asked.

Sam'l rose cumbersomely, and made his way along the quay.

"He's a bit tired still, seemingly," said Jan thoughtfully, as he contemplated the stiffly moving figure. Adding, in meditative sing-song: "And he've been restin' all day, too."

H. D. LOWRY.

*From "Wreckers and Methodists,"
by permission of the Author.*

JONAS FISHER.

A POEM IN BROWN AND WHITE.

My mission day is Saturday,
For then at Two shop-work is o'er,
(On Sabbath, day of rest, I go
Three times to church, and praye's before),

And all the afternoon I give
To visiting the poor indeed:
Rich people scarce could even guess
The wretched life these creatures lead.

Each house is many stories high,
Each room a family contains;
And there they breed, and breathe foul air,
Like rats inhabiting the drains.

Though, when one comes to think of it,
The rats are far more clean and sweet;
These people neither comb nor wash,
Rats trim their fur and keep it neat.

O dear! O dear! the sights one sees!
In a close court the other day,
I saw some lean, large-stomached babes,
All busy at their childish play:

They dabbled in the thick black slime,
Stuck fish-heads in and drew them out,
Made pies of stuff much worse than mud,
While fat blue-bottles buzzed about.

Poor innocents ! for those who die
In early years what bliss untold,
To pass from filth and haddock-heads
To seas of glass and streets of gold !

I prayed an earnest prayer for them,
Then turned and climbed a winding stair
That smelt of cats, knocked at a door,
Half opened it, and looked in there.

Notions do differ. Some good folk
Are to the poor quite rough behaved :
Push into rooms, hat on, and cry—
"Well, how's your soul ? Friend, are you saved ?"

Attention thus they hope to draw
By sudden pain or startling noise ;
As pedlars shout to puff their wares,
Or teachers lass their careless boys.

But I have always liked to act
On "Do as you'd be done by" rule,
And show the manners that I learned
At my dear native Berkshire school.

Well, at the opening door I paused,
Stood still and just put in my chin,
Took off my hat, half bowed, and said—
"Good afternoon. May I come in ?"

An inner porch I then perceived ;
The door that moment open burst,
Out rushed two angry Irish wives,
And shook their fists, and raged and cursed.

"Off with you, dirty Protestant !
You beast ! you devil ! get away."
(I cannot write their curious brogue,
But tell the things they meant to say.)

On hearing this I breathed a prayer—
Which helps one much, and much protects—
"Don't call me Protestant," I said,
"All Christians don't belong to sects."

"You're not a Christian, sure, at all ;
You're one that mocks God's mother mild."
"Blest above women she," says I.
I smiled, and then the women smiled.

This kind of wide-mouthed Irish folk,
Change like a swallow in its flight ;
One, two,—they want to shed your blood,
Three, four,—they're friendly and polite.

"Come in, sir, come," the women said,
And wiping clean their only chair.
They moved it tow'ards me ; suddenly
I heard a growl as from a bear,

And off his bed there leaped a man,
A huge, half-drunken, savage beast ;
He seized a knife, and ran at me ;
I stood, and did not budge the least,

But fixed my eyes upon his eyes,
And cowed him through God's help—as when
An angel stopped the lion's mouths
From eating Daniel in the den.

Then both the women made a rush,
And threw themselves upon the man,
And caught him by his arms and legs :
Oh ! what a dreadful scene began.

They reel, they roll, they twist about,
(Like the three Greeks that fought with snakes—
One sees them in the plaster casts—)
The windows dance, the flooring shakes.

As music at a wild-beast show,
With roars and cries combines its strum,
So shouts, yells, howls together rose,
Rap, rap, went oaths like tap of drum.

Crack goes the fellow's rotten shirt,
One half flies this way, one half that ;
But ere his trousers also split,
The broad-backed women laid him flat,

And put him helpless on his bed,
And tossed and turned him as they chose ;
He gave a few indignant snorts,
Then passed into a drunken doze.

Thus fell the mighty—luckily ;
And now came pleasant times indeed,
The women so polite and kind,
So glad to hear me pray and read.

They really scarce would let me go,
They hungered for the food of Life ;
Next week their zeal was just the same ;
The next, they chased me with a knife.

The priest, of course, had come meanwhile,
And heavy threats upon them laid :
I owe no grudge ; as one might say,
He did it in the way of trade.

But still when people take to hunt
A missionary down the street,
Then at their door—in Scripture phrase—
He shakes the dust from off his feet.

Well, after that, I went to see
A far more quieter set than these :
An old Italian and his wife,
Who dealt in stucco images.

Gambetti was their name, I think,
An inoffensive sort of pair ;
They scarcely knew one English word,
But treated me with courteous care.

Such funny things upon their shelves,—
Queens, Holy Virgins, Neptune, Mars,
And several naked Goddesses,
Pigs, Angels, and a Prince with stars :

Young Samuel kneeling in his shirt;
 Crusoe with parrot, gun, and goat;
 St. John in Patmos with a bird;
 And baby Moses in his boat:

Dogs, cats, canaries, heroes, saints,
 All green and scarlet, gold and blue;
 Things much too sacred to be named;
 The "Dying Gladiator" too.

(Some lines about that plaster cast
 Quite long ago my fancy took—
 "Butchered to make a holiday"—
 I have them in my extract-book.

And to myself, when people fail
 In pious public-speech, I say—
 "Butchered is this good gentleman
 To make a Christian holiday.")

Leaving Gambetti and his wife,
 Another quiet call I made,
 Within a rather decent house,
 Where a sick, aged woman stayed.

'Midst weakness, loneliness, and pain,
 Her every look seemed praise to sing;
 In heart she was an holy saint,
 Though such a poor old doting thing.

A few small comforts she possessed—
 Whose lot is there that nothing mends?
 First place, a store of books, the gift
 Of kind Episcopalian friends.

Now, though to favour sect o'er sect
 Is not my way, I must attest
 That of all pious books I see,
 Episcopalian are the best.

So full of manly, simple faith,
 So rich in warmth and sweet content,
 No harsh malignant threatenings,
 No cold hard-hearted argument.

I'm speaking of the genuine thing,
 The good old-fashioned stately school;
 Asses will bray in lion-skins,
 And wolves will howl in coats of wool.

So when I called on Widow Smith
 I chose some volume from her shelf
 And read to her, and thus I got
 No little profit for myself.

For if a teacher never learns,
 His prayers and talk grow weak and cold;
 As spiders that go spinning on
 Spin webs at last that will not hold.

Another joy the widow had,—
 I am not one that strains at gnats,
 I did not blame her foolish waste,—
 She kept three lazy, greedy cats

What could the creatures get to eat?
 No rats or mice would enter where
 Provisions were so very scarce;
 Cats surely cannot live on air—

Though in such rooms the atmosphere's
 Close substance might be almost carved,—
 Quite strange it seemed to see them fat,
 While Widow Smith was nearly starved.

This is a contradiction odd,
 Which meets you every day you live:
 The rich most often like to keep,
 The poor most often like to give.

They get so little at a time
 That thrift seems scarcely worth their pains;
 At length they lose the power to save,
 But spend, give, waste, till naught remains.

Minds are, like bodies, slaves to use,
 And wrongful habits mischief breed;
 Crammed stomachs learn to hold too much,
 Starved ones can't keep the food they need.

Good Widow Smith! Some ten days thence,
 When last that humble floor I trod,
 Her poor old frame was stiff in death,
 Her saintly soul had gone to God.

"Had gone to God"—strange phrase, methinks!
 As if some special house were His.
 Is earth a place where God is not?
 Let's say—"Her soul had gone to bliss."

I saw her just before she died,
 Calm, trustful, patient, and resigned;
 She would have been in perfect peace,
 But for one thought that vexed her mind.

Grasping my arm she drew me close,—
 I scarce could hear her voice at all,—
 "Oh! Jonas, if it were His will,
 I'd like a decent funeral."

I kissed her brow, and pledged myself
 That what she wished should come to pass;
 Soles swiftly flitted o'er her face,
 As butterflies across the grass.

Once more she smiled, then closed her eyes,
 And never opened them again:
 At set of sun she slipped away
 Without a struggle or a pain.

THE EARL OF SOUTHBESK.

By permission of the Author.

"THE BUNGLETON BANQUET."

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, although you will not find
 it marked upon the map, Bungleton is the county
 town of Blundershire, and it is situated on the
 river Botch.

Some months ago I attended the annual banquet of the First Volunteer Battalion (King's Own Royal Blundershire Fallbacks, that was held at the "Cork and Candlestick Hotel," Bungleton.

It is not my intention to describe that gastronomic triumph as embodied in the *menu*, but rather to illustrate, more or less truthfully, some of the speeches given during the evening.

The Chairman (Major Popper) first gave the loyal toasts. He said: "Ladies—I mean Gentlemen—I intend—I intend to take the two first toasts upon the list together; my reason—being, I find the speeches usually given in connection therewith, are never reported by the local press. Ladies, I—I—er—I mean gentlemen—I have very great pleasure in giving you 'The Queen'—oh—and in addition, 'The Rest of the Royal Family.'"

Here Mr. Percy Pilchard, the marvellous male soprano, began to sing the National Anthem, but as the regimental band, stationed in the corridor, commenced to play "God bless the Prince of Wales" at the same moment, Percy subsided with suppressed emotion, whilst the company sat, smoked, and smiled serenely.

General Tallboys then gave "The Sea and Land Forces." He said: "Gentlemen, I—ah—I have nevah sought fish whilst undah sholtah, I—ah—I—why—well you all know what I said; I—I mean what I meant. The toast of 'The Bungleton Beekeepers' Association' is always—I mean, of 'The Sea and Land Forces'—is doubtless appropriate at a gathering of this kind; indeed, where should we be—in short, how should we exist—without the—ah—guidance, and—ah—the almost mothahly protection of ouah ancient and revered Corporation, presided ovah by his worshopful the—ah—Lord Bishop, and—ah—clergy of the diocese? I regret, howevah, to note a deficit on the yeah's accounts, amounting to fifteen guineas. This does not include six months' wages due to Spoffkins, ouah professional bowlah, or repairs to the racing eight. Notwithstanding we have made great progress, and by laying down a new main from Pecover Street to Park Place we shall be enabled to declare a dividend of 25 per cent. on the preference shares, and carry £2009 to the reserve fund of the company. Gentlemen, I—ah—I ask you to drink the health of the mayah, Mr. Pym, with musicial honahs."

At this point I fled to the buffet, and three large sodas having assured me I was both sane and sober, I rejoined the guests just as Mr. Percy Pilchard was finishing off "The Queen," a privilege he had been denied earlier in the evening.

Mr. Pym then rose to respond. He said: "Gentlemen, I am not the mayor—no, I am not the mayor, no, I am the wetherve thection of the thea and land forthes. A vevy old wytah wonce wote: 'To fight or not to fight, that ith the questiloun.' Now, ath I never did fight, I can't be expected to

know vevy much about it; but thepeaking for the wetherve forthes, I may thay with Thakethepeare, 'We don't want to fight, but, by Jingo, if we do!' Our native land, gentlemen, ith a land flowing with milk and honey, it ith a land flowing with milk and honey—" Here—he was interrupted by a stout old farmer at the back of the room, who observed: "Land fur growin' money! I know taint! How can 'ee expect to grow turnips if 'ee doan't put nothin' into't? Why, when my fayther varmed thick forty acres over gen th' long parrick 'ood, he laid out twenty pound t' acre, an' then he grow'd nought but thistles!"

This slight interruption somewhat disconcerted Mr. Pym, but, like a true soldier, he made another gallant attack. He said: "It ith, ath I thaid before, a land flowing with milk and honey and—and——"

And I think he would have added more, but the farmer again interrupted with "I tell 'ee it ain't; I—ought to know. Who be you? Why thees doesn't know a 'os's bean from a acorn!"

Then Mr. Pym blushed, and went at it again, saying "It ith, ath I thaid before, a land flowing with milk and oth beanth, I—I mean, milk and acornth; and but for the wetherve forces we might be overwun with——"

"Thistles!" yelled the farmer. "An' why? Cos you put your money in your pocket, instead o' puttin' it in the land! Why, when I were a young un, not no bigger'n you be, I sowed twenty quarter o' winter oats, and dang me if they didn't all coom op mangel-wuzzel!"

Mr. Pym was now in a very bad way; after frantically expatiating on the advantages of placing both mangel-wurtzel, winter o's, and horse beans in your pocket, he added: "In conclusion I with to thank you all moith heartily, and that vevy—that vevy objectionable old acorn in particular—for the nithe way in which you have wethieved thith toath."

Then he sat down, and the marvellous male soprano sang, "Let me like a soldier fall."

The next toast was, "The Mayor and Corporation of Bungleton." This had been entrusted to a Mr. Coggins, but, as Mr. Coggins was discovered slumbering with his head buried in a dish of muscatels and almonds, the Mayor rose at once, to avoid unpleasantness. He began: "Gentlemen, it's just six months since you did me the honner to helect me to heccupy the konnerable position I now 'old. I 'ave listened with hintense hinterest to the hobervations of Mr. Coggins—I mean to the hobervations Mr. Coggins would 'ave made if—he'd been awake—and when I look 'around, and see so many members of the hupritic and bartistic hinstitooshun I 'ave the honner to sit upon—I mean hundler—no, hover—I 'asten, as is my bounden dooty, to pay tribute to that hexcellent collection. Gentlemen, the success of hevery Temperance horganisation is—I mean the success of the

british harmy—is to be found in its banquets. The strength of a nation may be most accurately estimated by its appetite. 'Fill our crops,' says the poet, 'an' we'll fight 'ard.' "

Speaking for the Corporation, I may say that much excellent work 'as been done, and the harm of Law and Horder made to hoperate in hevery direction. I ham deeply hindebted to Mr. Coggins for 'avin' so kindly mentioned my many hacts of private benevolence. I—I mean for 'avin' so kindly refrained from doin' so. And thankin' Mr. Coggins for the very hable way in which he 'as—I mean the way in which he would 'ave proposed this toast, if 'e 'ad been sober—and the very 'earty way in which—I mean the way in which you would 'ave received it, if you'd 'ad the chance, I—gentlemen, I'll sit down."

Here "The Bungleton Glee Club" gave a very tasteful rendering of "He came home in the morning, with the milk."

The last toast but one was "The Ladies," but the proposer, Mr. Gasley, fearing lest want of time should prevent him giving the brilliant speech he had prepared, made bold to deliver himself thereof even before the toast of the evening had come on for hearing. He said, "Mr. Mayor, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Mr. Gentlemen, I have a very difficult task to perform; for the toast of "The Ladies" appeals to every one of us. The very first girl ever born was, I am told, a lady, and if the very last girl ever born isn't a lady, depend upon it, it will be through no fault of her own! Ladies are not only the most fearful and wonderful of all insects, but they are also things of beauty, and a joy warranted to keep good in any climate. Their arms are of more real use than the arms of warfare, and their heads—I mean their hearts—are softer than a lemon jelly. I should strongly advise all you fellows to get married, although proposing is of course a beastly bore. The first girl I proposed to giggled at me for three weeks, and then married a gasfitter. The second wouldn't have me, because she liked another johnnie, who feasted her with pop-corn; and the last time I proposed to a girl her father came around, and very nearly slow me with a scimitar.

At this point I received a message from my mother-in-law, demanding my instant return home. 'Twas fortunate I went, for I subsequently learned that thirty-one gentlemen were fined forty shillings apiece next morning for being upon licensed premises during prohibited hours.

ARTHUR F. KNIGHT.

October 27, 1933.

SAUCE FOR THE GANDER.

A DRAMA OF THE DAY.

CHARACTERS.

JOHN, a City man, the husband. SUSAN, his wife.

SCENE.—A dining-room in a villa at Streatham. The couple have dined. JOHN is smoking and reading the evening paper, and SUSAN is playing rather nervously with the remains of her dessert.

SUSAN. John, I want to speak to you.

JOHN. Say on, Macduff!

SUSAN. Please don't talk like that. This is serious.

JOHN. What! has the cook given warning?

SUSAN. How like you to think of that.

JOHN. Well, well, what is it?

SUSAN [solemnly]. It is not an easy matter to tell you, but I must nerve myself.

JOHN. Nerve yourself! What do you mean? Has the rhubarb-tart got into your head?

SUSAN. Do not be violent, John; this is no question of rhubarb-tarts. [Tragically.] We have got far beyond rhubarb-tarts.

JOHN. Look here, Susan. You appear to have taken leave of your senses. Unless you want to drive me mad too, drop these tragedy airs and tell me what you mean.

SUSAN. Will you hear me?

JOHN. Of course I will. Out with it.

SUSAN. You know that I have lately joined a club—the Progressive Circle?

JOHN. I do. Young Ramrod calls it "The Unsexed Prigs."

SUSAN. He is a scoffer. Well, at that club I have learned many things, among others that I have rights.

JOHN. In—deed!

SUSAN. Yes, we have been instructed by Hakon Waffle, the chief poet of the Movement—

JOHN [aside]. And the chief prig—

SUSAN. That Woman must assert herself, and when not congenially mated may seek a different environment.

JOHN [beginning to see it]. Just so.

SUSAN. Well, some of us have decided to act upon that.

JOHN [notes the "us" but keeps calm]. In what way?

SUSAN. Well, those who are not appreciated at home—who do not find things, as it were, on their intellectual level—have resolved to seek more favourable surroundings.

JOHN. May I ask the names?

SUSAN. Well, Ethel Maynard told her husband that she was somewhat weary of home life and pined for freedom. That was yesterday.

JOHN. And what did Maynard say?

SUSAN. I am ashamed to say he was very rude. He told her she might go and be—I can't

repeat it; and he did not come back from town last night, so she is very much upset.

JOHN [*aside*]. Bravo, Maynard! [*Aloud*]. Any one else?

SUSAN. Mrs. Johnson's husband was much affected, and she doesn't quite know what to do. The fact is, they want a leader.

JOHN [*polite but raging*]. And are they likely to find one?

SUSAN. [*hesitating*]. Well, the fact is, they rather look to me.

JOHN [*who has seen this coming and has now made up his mind how he will take it*]. Yes? SUSAN. I thought you would be astonished.

JOHN. I beg your pardon. I'm not.

SUSAN [*making a plunge*]. You must have seen that for some time you were not all I required intellectually, and many of your habits have begun to pall upon me. As Mr. Waffle says, I want more appreciation [*the Recording Angel paints in vain after JOHN's sotto voce remarks on WAFFLE*], and a freer atmosphere in which to luxuriate.

JOHN [*calmness itself, much to her disgust*]. What habits, Susan? I may still call you Susan, I suppose?

SUSAN. Oh, trifles. But they upset me: your conversation lacks profundity, you have objectionable aunts, and you will persist in playing the bassoon.

JOHN. Dear me! And what do you propose to do?

SUSAN. We think of settling somewhere—probably within an easy distance of Paris, where intellectual emotion finds its highest expression. I have my own money, and I need hardly remind so great a newspaper reader of the Clitheroe case.

JOHN. You need not, indeed. And when do you propose to go?

SUSAN [*staggered by his coolness*]. Oh, in a day or two.

JOHN. Very well, suit your own convenience.

SUSAN. But—but you don't seem surprised; you take it very coolly; I can't understand you.

JOHN. I can return the compliment.

SUSAN. But you raise no objection.

JOHN. None at all.

SUSAN. Is this all you have to say?

JOHN. All.

SUSAN. What are you going to do?

JOHN. Have you any right to ask?

SUSAN. No, perhaps not; but still—

JOHN [*who has been keeping this trump-card up his sleeve*]. But still I will tell you. There is one advanced lady in the neighbourhood who does not, I believe, belong to your society.

SUSAN [*snifing*]. You mean Honoria Weston, I should think not, indeed.

JOHN. But she does hold advanced views, does she not?—believes in what I fancy is called free love?

SUSAN [*snorting*]. So I hear. You ought to know; she always makes a fuss over you.

JOHN. You flatter me; but let us hope you are right, as it will make my task easier.

SUSAN [*alarmed*]. What are you going to do?

JOHN. To take a leaf out of your book. When you go, I shall ask Honoria Weston—she is a pleasing person—to come here; [*slowly*] and I daresay it will not require much persuasion to induce her to take your place.

SUSAN [*who has listened with heaving chest and dilating eyes*]. John! Honoria Weston here! My place! Do you mean to insult me? Oh, this is too much!

JOHN. You are right. It is too much. Look here, Susan; I may not be intellectual, but I am not such a confounded fool as to stand all this tommy-rot. Go away with your Ethel Maynards and your Waffles; within twenty-four hours afterwards Honoria Weston is installed here: and if she won't come, there are plenty of enfranchised women in London who'll make no bones about it.

[*Goes to door.*]

SUSAN. John! John! Where are you going?

JOHN. To serenade Honoria. She dotes on the bassoon.

[*Exit. a. SUSAN collapses with head on table. Collapse also of the Paris trip and the Progressive Club.*]

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

A NIGHT IN BELGRAVE SQUARE.

It was just about half-past seven as near as a touchers, last Tuesday night, when a little barry might ha' bin seen a drivin' round the corner of a street leadin' into Belgrave-square.

The cove as druv it stops the donkey just afore they turned into the square, and another cove jumps down, as the sayin' is, in a twinklin'; ne was togged for all the world like a head waiter in a music-hall; he'd got on a swaller-tailed coat a slap-up pair of dark kickseys, and a hat with no shine on it as had been kivered with black cloth; likewise he wore gloves carried in his hand.

"How do I look, Jem?" says he.

"Slap up, old feller," says the other. "Good-bye; gee hup, Neddy," he says to the donkey, and druv off. The cove in the black garments was me; and I'll tell you how it all come about.

I'm a costermonger, I am, as can yarn a pound and pay his rent and things, with here-an'-there a one; but what signifies boastin'? Well, I give a bit of a party on Christmas Day—not half a bad 'un, though I say it. We'd done pretty well in greens and lighter vegetables durin' the week, tho' pertaters wasn't much account; howsumever, we wasn't hard up for a sov. There was just a nice lot on us. First there was me and the old woman

and the seven children; then there was the old lady's sister and her husband as is in trade, keepin' a greengrocer's shop; and a young feller my daughter's keepin' company with, and his second cousin what's under Government, bein' a lamp-lighter; and there was gran'mother and Mrs. Beecles rentin' my back kitching, by the same token bein' three weeks behind in her rent, and never mind, says I, arsk her hup, and let bygones be bygones on Christmas Day.

Well, arter we'd had the goose and the pudden, the old lady puts the gin and chestnuts on the table, and some more coke on the fire, and the young 'uns gits into the corner and has a game at lickin the colour orl' some pretty sojers and sailors I bought 'em at the sweetstuff-shop in the court, made artificial like; the two young people was a havin' a spell of talk together about goin' in a van to Hampton Court, and the rest on us was a sittin' round the fire a talkin' to one another.

"Well," ses I, liftin' o' my glass up, "here's God bless us all, them as is enjoyin' o' theirselves, and them as ain't."

"Amen to that," says the lamplighter. "Lord," he ses, casual like, "it's hard to think there's many a poor creeter without so much as a old jacket to pawn for a toothful o' juniper this day."

"Ah! and many as has got a drop," says the old ooman, "can't enjoy it; what with natterin' and worritin' o' theirselves with this and that."

"Well, I fancy you're wrong there, old lady," I says. "Every cove as has brass enough to get a bit or a drop must be jolly in the natur' o' things."

"Not a bit of it," says Brockey, the greengrocer. "If you was to see the gentlefolks together," ses he—he's waited on 'em, with his hands kivered with white kid gloves, and pumps tied with ribbon, which is quite the gentleman himself—"not a bit of it," ses he. "If you was to see 'em moonin' and manderin' about at what they calls their parties, it 'ud give yer the neuralgy. The fast party I went to they all seemed so cold like they give me the spasms: and I was obliged to take a drop o' summat afore I could fetch my breath, as the saying is."

I don't know how I come to think on it, but I broke out all of a sudden with a "Lor! I'd give the price of a farden cake to go and see the poor miserable things."

"Would yer?" says he, snappin' me up in a minnit; "I'm goin' to be a nextra down in the kitching at a real slap-up affair in Belgrave-square next week, and if you'd fancy to go," he says, "I'll put yer up to a dodge as 'll parse yer in."

"Get a order for two while you're about it," ses the old lady.

"It ain't done with orders," he says; "this is it. There's a very curus old gentleman, a major from Indy, and his wife, which hates one another like pison, and is always a squabblin' together

when they think nobody's there to hear 'em; but afore company they make believe to be the most lovin' in the world. Well, they gives a dinrer party now and then, and he's got his set o' people he likes and she's got hern, and he hates her set and she can't abear his'n; so this time they've cum to a sort of agreement together. The major ses, ses he, 'Hang it, madam,' he ses, 'let's divide the honour,' he ses. 'We are goin' to ask fourteen,' he ses, 'and I'll get seven of my set, and you shall get seven of yours; I sha'n't ask no questions, and don't you neither. If you'll be civil to my friends, I'll be the same to yours, and nobody'll be none the wiser.' 'Very well,' says she, 'agreed, on condition,' she says, 'that you don't ask to super-wise my list, or grumble if I asks people you don't know.' 'Not a bit of it,' he says. 'I don't care who you ask. Only, don't you bother yourself about my people, either.' So that's the agreement; now, as I've happened to hear from the footman as how one on 'em have sent to say he can't come, why, I'll tog you up like a lord, and you can easy slip in and take his place."

"Yes," says my old lady, but then they'll find him out."

"How?" says he: "the old lady 'll think he's a friend of the major's, and the major 'll think he belongs to the old lady's set, and they'll both be awful civil on that account, and if he keeps himself quiet he'll pull through it rattlin'," says he.

Well, I felt a little nervous at first, but havin' talked so pert like about goin' I didn't like to draw back. So we settled as how he should come round and see to my dressin' on Tuesday afternoon, and then, when the time came, Jem should drive me round in the barrer.

I've told yer how he druv me round in the barrer, and about his sayin' "Gee hup, Neddy," and leavin' me alone.

I must say it timed me a little when I found myself all by myself, and see a policeman, too, near the railins. But I says to myself, a thinkin' of the donkey, "Gee hup," I says, and with that I turns the corner, and walks up to the door of the house.

I expected to find a lot o' people waitin' outside, but there warn't nary one, and not so much as a song to be heard from a winder—so I gives a knock.

The door was opened like lightnin' by as big and fine a feller as ever stepped in shoe. He'd got on a snuff-coloured bob-tail coat and weskit, with brass buttons and plush breeches, and stom'jgs that looked for all the world like silk; so he jest puts down my hand to try, and touched his 'alf, and, by George, I found they was—real Chaney silk.

"You're a going it, you are," says I, pleasant like, but he gave me a awful look; and then I remembered that Brockey had said something about keepin' quiet; so I walked past him, and was just

goin' into the parlour. "Here," he says—"here," a callin' after me, "I'll jest take your hat and coat," says he.

"Right you are," I says, glad to see him come round again to his temper. "Its a narsty sort o' night," ses I. "How's master?" wishin' to show 'im that I bore no malice, and it was all right. But he only stared at me more than ever, and at last he said, "What name shall I say, sir, if you please?"

I was just a goin' to pop out Sprouts; but I remembered what Brockey had told me. So I says, stately like, to show I could be up in the sterrups too, "Look in the right-hand pocket of the coat, young man, and you'll find it written on a card, and there's tuppence in the other pocket," I ses, wishin' to do the gentleman, "for a drink o' beer for yourself."

So he rummages out a card, and he marches straight upstairs with it; not so much as sayin' With your leaf or By your leaf.

At last, when he'd got to the top of the first flight, he turns round, and says he to me, rather contemptuous, says he, "Come this way, if you please."

"Who taught you manners?" says I, now fairly bilin' over, "a walkin' up stairs before your betters, young man." But I never seed such a spiritless chap; he only give me another look; so I walked up.

The place was clean enough; but there was doosed little furniture in the hall; just a hard sort of chair without a bit of stuffin' on it and a largish mat. The stairs was nice, and the carpets soft like to the feet in going up. At last we gets to the fust floor, and the feller opens a door and sings out the readin' on the card, "Horatio Weer de Weer."

I felt a sort o' chokin' at the throat, and a coldness too, more especial as I wore a high starched collar and a little tuppenny-'a-penny white rag twisted round my neck, instead of the old belcher. Howsoever, in I goes.

Well, the room was a big 'un, and looked awful uncomfortable; I never was in such a dreary place in all my life. There was a lot of little chairs in it as wasn't big enough for anybody over seven stone to sit down upon; and they'd taken the bed out o' the back room, and made it all into one, with open doors. When I got in there was about a dozen or fourteen people a sittin' on 'em, and a sort of cheeky little fellow with white hair standin' in the middle of the room.

I guessed he was the major, tho' he hadn't so much as his epulettes on, bein' dressed in black and white, like me and the rest.

Anybody with half a eye could ha' seen the major didn't know nothin' o' me, though he didn't like to show it. So, with a sort o' sidelong glance at his wife, which she didn't seem to twig, he makes me a very perlitte bow.

Brockey's last words to me was, "You've got

nothing to do but bow," says he, "and you'll pull through all right."

So I gives the major a reg'lar scraper, and then I sits down on a sort of sofa-bedstead in the middle of the room, and I takes a look round. I never see such a lot of cures in my life as the rest of the people was. There was six or seven females, old and young, and ne'er a decent cap amongst the lot. As for dresses I can't talk about 'em, for of all the skimpgd up things as ever I see they was the wust I just for all the world like my little gal's frocks when she was turnin' o' nine. There was skirt enough in 'em to have made half-a-dozen bodies over and over again. But I suppose they'd all bin bought by contract of a slop dressmaker, and she'd made some mistake in the cut of the lower part and took it out by scampin' the rest. Their poor arms, too, was bare and cold, and they'd tried to keep their chilly fingers warm by puttin' on their gloves.

One on 'em, rather a old party, had a eyeglass and a hooky nose, and she got a starin' at me with it till I felt rather uncomfortable.

The men was just as bad. They was dressed for all the world like a batch of undertakers, and precious miserable it was. Tight shining boots with the huppers made of hile-cloth, and cut away coats with nothing to keep yer warm round the waist and lins, then the hair o' most o' the great gabies was parted down the middle, and likewise a eyeglass, too.

The room was furnished hawful shabby; there was ne'er a cupboard in it, and as for chaney ornaments on the mantelpiece, not a single one. There was a good fire enough blazin' in the grate, but devil a kettle o' bilin' water on it for a drop o' grog, and ne'er a dog, or cat, or child to be seen in all the blessed place. This don't soot my fireplace, ses I to myself, but without speakin'.

I think they was all as frightened o' one another as I was o' them, for they talked so low it was more like a buzz, and they hadn't the pluck to laugh out loud, but only grinned. As for me, I said nothin', rememberin' what Brockey had told me, till an oldish cove come out and posted hisself near me, and begun a talkin' about pictures and heart.

"I seldom touches it," I ses, "except once in a way with sage and onions; and I ain't wery nutty on it then." Arter that he walked away.

I was a gettin' awful hungry. At last a little fat sort of a cove throws the door open and looks at the major, and he says, "Dinner!" Then the major's old lady begun bobbin' about a askin' of everybody to take everybody's arm. I was just a goin' to make up to a sweetly pretty little thing when the old gal says to me, says she, "Will you take Lady Hawkey, Mr. de Weer?" says she; and afore I could say Jack Robinson the old party with the hook nose and the eyeglass puts her harm in mine, and in this here stoopid fashion we gulliwanted downstairs.

Well, at last we got into a big room where I couldn't see a blessed thing to eat but flowers and candles, which was stuck all over the table, and looked very pretty, but wasn't satisfyin'. Some on 'em took their gloves off, fearin' to sile 'em, I suppose, but I made up my mind to show 'em as the value of a pair o' kids was nothin' to me, so I kept mine on.

Presently in walks that imperdent feller, quite demure, as took my coat, along with two or three more fellows, and he says to me, "What soup 'll you take?"

"Pea," ses I, in a low tone.

"We ain't got it, sir," he says.

"Then bring me a basin o' mutton broth," ses I, quite haughty.

The old woman with the eyeglass gave me a look but said nothin'. Whether he heard me or not I can't say; but, howsoever, he brought me a plate with the bottom just kivered by some sort o' brown stuff I never see before. I thought I wouldn't make a rumpus, so I fell to. But I see him in a corner a whisperin' to one of his mates and lookin' at me.

"It's a capital drop o' soup," ses I to the old lady at last, not likin' to seem glum.

What she said I don't know, for I was too busy with the spoon. When the young feller come round I gives him the plate, and ses, "I'll take a drop more."

Cunnin' like he tries to do me agin. So says he, as if he was hard of hearin', "Turbot, sir, or salmon, did you say?"

Says I, still low, but betwix my teeth like, says I, "Soup, you lubber." I thought it was gettin' high time to stop him dictatin' to me in his own master's house.

So he gave a nasty sort of a smile, and brought me another spoonful of the brown.

Well, when I was eatin' of it, the old woman stared at me that bold—I never see the like; and when I advised her to take a drop more she moved her chair a little from me, and never said a single word.

After the soup they brought on lots o' things with crackjaw names, too long for me to remember. Most of the people seemed to know all about 'em. As for me, every time the old major offered me anything I jest bowed to him, and so got on verry well. But that feller behind my chair was spiteful to the last, and seemed to have took a dislike to me the moment I come in the place, as had done no harm to 'im. If ever I turned my head a moment he whipped away my plate like a flash o' lightnin', and there was no such thing as gettin' a good taste of anything flesh or fish. I didn't get a single drop o' gravy, for he allus managed to take it away from me jest as I'd got my knife ready to clear it off the plate.

The rest on 'em was the okkurdest creetures at eatin' as ever I see, rammin' their pawks into

their mouths like mad. So I made one more trile to make things pleasant with the old lady. "Mind you don't prick yourself, Mrs. Hawkey," I says, smilin'.

"Pray do not distress yourself on my account," says she, as pleasant as a vinegar-bottle havin' words with a pepper-box.

I was werry nigh garspin', for I hadn't had a drop to drink, so I ses to the feller in the black coat, "I'm thirsty," says I. "What'll you take, sir?" says he. "Anythink you've got in the house," I says; and if he didn't give me a dose of the sourest muck I ever put to my lips, I'm a Dutchman.

So I made up my mind to punch his head just as I was a leavin' of the house.

Well, then the old fellow as had spoke to me on the fust-floor began a talkin' about "fleebottomy," which I suppose is Latten for flower, for it seemed to be all about buds and plants, and the old major says, quite fine—

"That there last lekture o' yourn at the Institutshun," says he, "was werry instruktiv' and even entertainin'."

They've got a way o' talkin' that's somehow different from ourn, but, if you're sharp, you soon ketch hold on it.

"It would ha' bin more so," says the other one, "if I'd 'ad the advantsij of your Injun experience," pat enuff with his arnser.

That reg'lar tickled the old major: he quite seemed to warm up like, and begun chattin' away a good 'un. His talk hadn't much to do with flow'rs as I could see, but it was about everythink else, and I suppose it's all fleebottomy. It was all about Injer, and punkers, and doodies, and helefants, and tigers, and ragers—some sort o' wild beast I ain't seen, but I thought I'd show him he hadn't got it all his own way.

"I've been with the tigers myself, major," says I, "leastways I've seen 'em in the Sologikai Gardens."

This was the first thing I'd spoken out loud, and it reg'lar turned the larf agin the major. All on 'em tittered a bit, except him and his wife, and they looked quite wild and savij at one another, as if they was arskin' questions.

"One o' their rows agin, I suppose," says I, and felt glad I'd got over my shyness, and come out so well.

Then in comes all them idle fellers and strips off two slips o' cloth like round towels, and kivers the table with a lot of wine in decanters and all sorts o' fruit; as for me, I was dyin' for a smoke, but I see ne'er a pipe nor a bit o' baccy in the place.

The old major's wife was more spiteful than I thought, for arter lookin' awful evil at me she gives a kind o' glance at the rest on 'em, and blowed if the stuck-up creatures, old hook-nose and all, didn't sail right out 'o the room. All the better, thinks I to myself. Let 'em stay there till I sends for 'em; if our company ain't good enuff

for 'em, thinks I, they'll come back soon enuff after their tantrums. Now I hope we shall have a song, I says, and I begun a thinkin' of the toasts I should give 'em if they put me in the chair.

But no—ne'er a hammer, or a chairman, or a song. They all talked away like schoolboys over their lessons instead—about gettin' into Parliament and huntin' and heart and somethin' about last month's review in Edinburgh, that one old fellow said he'd seen that mornin', and nobod'y laughed or seemed to twig the blunder, except me; but I didn't say anythink, for I didn't want to make the old boy look like a fool. As for most o' their talk, it was such a pack o' stuff and nonsense that I ain't got the 'art to put it down.

Once or twice some on 'em had a drop o' wine together, and bobbed their heads at one another like heathens without so much as sayin' I looks towards yer, or Here's luck.

By-and-by the old feller gits up, tired o' waitin'. I suppose, so says he, "Lets go and jine the ladies," ses he, as if his sperrit was reglar broken. I'd harf a mind to say—Let 'em wait till they get out o' their tantrums; but I thought o' Brockey, and I didn't.

If my old lady was to see me give in like this, thinks I, I should be a mere plaything in my own place.

Well, we went upstairs. Some other time I'll tell yer about that second part in the drawin'-room, but I ain't got the heart to do it now. I sit it out for an 'our or two, till I felt as twittery as a kitten, and then I come away.

The barrer was waitin' for me round the corner, Jem, and you was there. Never shall I forget the taste of that drop o' porter yer brought out of the can, or the relish o' that lump o' bread and the onion you give me from the pocket of yer coat. For yer own privit year, old fellow, I got many things as I can't let out to the public; but this I will say, that unless I'd seed it myself, I couldn't ha' believed as creeturs wi' money in their pokkets and eddication could be so miserable. They're deservin' of all the pity of them as knows the blessin' of a good meal, pleasant conversation, and a easy way o' meetin' one's friends, and, tho' p'raps I may laf at 'em along wi' you, I'd be the fust person to put a trifle down for 'em at any public meetin', or get up a friendly lead or a sing-song to purvide the poor things with a Christian meal o' wittles and make their miserable lives more comfortable and 'appy.'

RICHARD WHITEING.

THE SELF-EXILED.

THERE came a soul to the gate of Heaven
Gliding slow—

A soul that was ransomed and forgiven,

And white as snow :

And the angels all were silent.

A mystic light beamed from the face

Of the radiant maid :

But there also lay on its tender grace

A mystic shade :

And the angels all were silent.

As sunlit clouds by a zephyr borne

Seem not to stir,

So to the golden gates of morn

They carried her :

And the angels all were silent.

"Now open the gate, and let her in,

And fling it wide,

For she has been cleansed from stain of sin,"

St. Peter cried :

And the angels all were silent.

"Though I am cleansed from stain of sin,"

She answered low,

"I came not hither to enter in,

Nor may I go :"

And the angels all were silent.

"I come," she said, "to the pearly door,

To see the Throne

Where sits the Lamb on the Sapphire Floor,

With God alone :"

And the angels all were silent.

"I come to hear the new song they sing

To Him that died,

And note where the healing waters spring

From His pierced side :"

And the angels all were silent.

"But I may not enter there," she said,

"For I must go

Across the gulf where the guilty dead

Lie in their woe :"

And the angels all were silent.

"If I enter Heaven I may not pass

To where they be,

Though the wail of their bitter pain, alas !

Tormenteth me :"

And the angels all were silent.

"If I enter Heaven I may not speak

My soul's desire

For them that are lying distraught and weak

In flaming fire :"

And the angels all were silent.

"I had a brother, and also another

Whom I loved well ;

What if, in anguish, they curse each other

In the depths of hell ?"

And the angels all were silent.

"How could I touch the golden harps,

When all my praise

Would be so wrought with grief-full warps

Of their sad days ?"

And the angels all were silent.

"How love the loved who are sorrowing,
 And yet be glad?
 How sing the songs ye are fain to sing,
 While I am sad?"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "Oh clear as glass is the golden street
 Of the city fair,
 And the tree of life it maketh sweet
 The lightsome air:"
 And the angels all were silent.
 'And the white-robed saints with their crowns
 and palms
 Are good to see,
 And oh so grand are the sounding psalms!
 But not for me:"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "I come where there is no night," she said,
 "To go away,
 And help, if I yet may help, the dead
 That have no day:"
 And the angels all were silent.
 St. Peter he turned the keys about,
 And answered grim;
 "Can you love the Lord, and abide without,
 Afar from Him?"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "Can you love the Lord who died for you,
 And leave the place
 Where His glory is all disclosed to view,
 And tender grace?"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "They go not out who come in here;
 It were not meet:
 Nothing they lack, for He is here,
 And bliss complete:"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "Should I be nearer Christ," she said,
 "By pitying less
 The sinful living or woeful dead
 In their helplessness?"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "Should I be liker Christ were I
 To love no more
 The loved, who in their anguish lie
 Outside the door?"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "Did He not hang on the cursed tree,
 And bear its shame,
 And clasp to His heart, for love of me,
 My guilt and blame?"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "Should I be liker, nearer Him,
 Forgetting this,
 Singing all day with the Seraphim,
 In selfish bliss?"
 And the angels all were silent.

The Lord Himself stood by the gate,
 And heard her speak
 Those tender words compassionate,
 Gentle and meek:
 And the angels all were silent.
 Now, pity is the touch of God
 In human hearts,
 And from that way He ever trod
 He ne'er departs:
 And the angels all were silent.
 And He said, "Now will I go with you,
 Dear child of love;
 I am weary of all this glory, too,
 In Heaven above:"
 And the angels all were silent.
 "We will go seek and save the lost,
 If they will hear,
 They who are worst but need me most,
 And all are dear:"
 And the angels were not silent.

DR. WALTER C. SMITH.

From "*Hilda among the Broken Gods*,"
 by permission of the Author.

GRACIE.

AMELIA WYVERN on "varnishing day" was a sight for the gods to see. Stepping out, daintily attired, her bright face positively brilliant with excitement, she carried in her well-gloved hands the neatest of colour-boxes and the newest of paint-brushes, as well as a tenderly treasured printed document which invited her to come and view her own picture in the — Street Exhibition.

She crossed the threshold of that sacred spot somewhat nervously, afraid of being stopped or turned away, yet trying to appear as self-possessed as though the best part of her twenty years had consisted of "varnishing-days."

When she entered the gallery, which was not a large one, she looked eagerly round, but could not for some time discover the bandit. There were about a dozen people in the room, women as well as men, strolling or standing about, mostly in knots of twos and threes, and all with a more or less chilled and dejected aspect. A couple of kindly workmen were bringing a long ladder for an unfortunate youth who wished to touch up his picture, hung as it was so high that nothing of it could be seen but the lower portion of a pair of highly glazed Wellington boots. Following the direction of the artist's upturned eyes, however, Amelia suddenly discerned her picture, hung on the top line, where it seemed so small as to resemble a richly coloured postage-stamp.

Alas, poor bandit! Alas, poor Amelia! The bandit frowned and glared in puny effort from his

altitude, whilst Amelia turned positively faint from disappointment, and two big tears forced themselves into her eyes.

She bit her lip hard to prevent the tears from running down her cheeks, and stole her hand furtively into her pocket to find her handkerchief. The painter of the boots had meanwhile commenced to climb his ladder, and, looking round somewhat suddenly, he encountered the pretty sorrowful face beneath him.

"Is your picture up here also?" he asked, kindly. "Shall I varnish it for you?"

"Oh, thank you, thank you!" stammered Amelia. Alas, the words of sympathy made the tremulous tears overflow!

"Y'bull get used to it," said the painter, gently; "anyhow, you've got your name in the catalogue. And at a little distance the picture looks uncommonly well, doesn't it, now? Besides, it's often those at the top that sell the soonest, you know."

Poor Amelia, gazing from afar at the well-known bluish features of her bandit, wondered if her new friend's pictures were always hung so high that he had grown used to speak on the subject with happy confidence; then, after thanking him, she wended her way slowly and sadly home.

She felt bound to appear as cheerful as possible, however, in her sister's presence, for Grace was waiting, in a perfect fever of anxiety, to hear the details of so eventful a morning. Therefore it came to pass that, a few days later, when Amelia and her mother sallied forth together to see the pictures, even Mrs. Wyvern was scarcely prepared for the shock of seeing the bandit so unduly elevated. There were no very well-known names among the painters represented in the Catalogue; consequently Mrs. Wyvern took a high stand, and was more angry than aggrieved.

"We must be prepared for a little jealousy, my child!" she added consolingly, after a burst of wrathful words; I daresay it is well known that you are young and pretty."

In which speech it may be thought that Mrs. Wyvern was somewhat hard upon the hangers, who were not, after all, of the feminine sex!

But whether her comparative success (or comparative failure) had been good for Amelia or not, it is certain that she went back to her work at her Professor's with improved industry. She worked early and late; she never seemed to tire. Her eager enthusiasm had mellowed and given place to a patient even-tempered love of her profession; once, when Grace spoke to her of the future, she answered gently:

"Oh, Gracie, I seem hateful to myself for having been so silly as to think I should ever do anything great."

"But you will, you must, Amy."

"Must I? I don't know, I scarcely dare to

hope. Oh, it is all as far off as that Aurora that you and Douglas were talking of one afternoon; do you remember, Gracie?"

"Douglas? Did you call him Douglas?" asked Grace in a whisper.

"Yes—no," answered Amelia, reddening. "I think of him as Douglas, sometimes."

"Amy!"

"Well."

"Come and sit beside me, will you, dear? There, give me your blessed old head close, and let me stroke it. Listen. If ever you think about me, by-and-by, later on——"

"Oh, Gracie, don't."

"When you think of me," repeated Grace, firmly, "think, dear, how glad I was that you thought of him as Douglas, your Douglas. Will you, Amy?"

"Yes," answered Amelia, who was crying. And thereupon she caught hold of her little sister's hand, and squeezed it violently, and then, without a word, she got up and ran out of the room.

A few days later, Grace called her mother to come and sit beside her.

The two were alone in the room. It was twilight, the hour the sick girl loved:

"Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower."

Grace thought it should not only be "the children's hour," as Longfellow meant it to be, but an hour of healing balm for all the sick and sorry, a time when our spirits loose themselves from their trammels and grow more spiritual—an hour, above all, when we seem nearer to those we love, and more able to say what at other times it is hard to say.

Outside, in the dreary fog-laden street, the gas-lamps were being lighted, one by one, and occasionally the rolling sound of carriage-wheels grew, and passed, and died away upon the ear.

"Mother, come and speak to me," said Grace; I want you to do something for me."

There was a rising sob in Mrs. Wyvern's throat as she obeyed the summons, for she had been wrapt in sorrowful meditation; nevertheless, sitting down silently, she took within her own the fragile fingers of Grace's outstretched hand.

They were very fragile fingers. Mrs. Wyvern could not but recollect with a fresh pain at her heart what Douglas M'Heish had told her yesterday, after he had held the child for awhile in his arms at the window. Yes, he said that the light weight had grown yet lighter; he thought it his duty to tell that, he said, and ever since he had spoken thus a sense of helpless misery had gathered tightly round Mrs. Wyvern's heart. For she knew, alas! of how little use to Grace were the medicines prescribed for her! she knew that hers was not any curable malady. . . .

"Will you do something for me mamma?"

"What is it, Gracie?"

"Something that I want, very, very much. Will you promise to do it, mamma?"

"Without knowing what it is?"

Mrs. Wyvern gazed at the eager little face, visibly eager even in the twilight shadows; tears came into her eyes; somehow she could not keep them back.

"Oh, promise, mother, promise!"

"Very well, I promise, child."

"And you will never, never tell."

"No, I will not tell; not if you do not wish it."

"I have saved four pounds of my own," said Grace hurriedly—"my very own—my pocket-money. And Amy has put five guineas on the bandit."

"Well?"

"I want you to buy the bandit. Do you understand, mother?"

"You—want—me—to—buy—the—bandit?" repeated Mrs. Wyvern, slowly.

"Yes, yes! Oh, you said you would do it! You must; you promised. And you promised that you would never tell."

"I will, not tell," said Mrs. Wyvern, gently. "But, Gracie, I scarcely see—"

"Don't you see," asked the girl feverishly—"don't you see that if Amy sells this picture, her first picture, she will be quite tremendously encouraged? The picture will have a red star on it—she told me that—and all the world will know that it is sold, and what a great painter she is going to be, and everybody will want to buy her pictures." Grace stopped, exhausted, and drew a long breath.

"My little Grace," said Mrs. Wyvern, huskily.

"I know so exactly how it will be," went on the child; "I have been thinking it all over, oh, for so long! It is the first picture that makes the whole difference, and, when once anybody has got a start, success follows easily enough. Poor Amy; she has nobody to help her on, only you and me, mother dear. But, above all, you will not tell! promise again, promise."

"Yes, I promise."

"I am afraid you must advance me the one pound five shillings. I will pay you back regularly, all my pocket-money, week by week."

"Will you, dear?"

Mrs. Wyvern spoke in a strange voice; fortunately the room was growing so dark that Gracie could not see her face, nor see the tears that rained and rained down so quickly that Mrs. Wyvern did not even attempt to dry them.

"I would have waited till I had saved all the money," said Gracie, after a pause, "but I thought it was better not to wait."

"Why not?"

"Oh, because—Well, the exhibition might shut soon, perhaps. But you will go to-morrow, mamma?"

"To-morrow?" repeated poor Mrs. Wyvern, vaguely.

"You must go and arrange with the secretary, and have the bandit sent by-and-by to some other address, to another name, not yours, of course. We will think it all out together, won't we, dear?"

There was a long pause, and then Gracie spoke again, very softly.

"Mother!"

"Well, my child?"

"If—if—well, suppose if I were to die, Amy would be just a very little bit richer, wouldn't she?"

"Just a little, darling."

Grace answered nothing; she only raised her mother's hand to her own loving lips, and kissed it, with a long, long kiss. Presently she whispered:

"That would help Amy—and Douglas." But she whispered the words so softly it is doubtful whether Mrs. Wyvern heard them: at all events she kept silence.

It happened that one day soon after this conversation Amelia received a letter containing the announcement of the sale of her first picture. Her joy was unbounded; she jumped up, and danced, and ran about the room like a child in high delight. Douglas M'Huish, who was present (he had looked in for a moment only, of course), sat open-mouthed and amazed, watching his lady-love's evident symptoms of lunacy, and wondering whether any effort on his part might ever succeed in calling forth such expressions of joy from her.

Mrs. Wyvern was somewhat silent and constrained, but Gracie, the little traitress, gave vent to many exclamations of pleasure and astonishment.

"Hurrah, Amy!" she cried; "who would have thought it? And yet did we not all of us prophesy this long ago? Why don't you come and shake hands with her, Mr. M'Huish, and tell her how awfully glad you are?"

But Amelia dragged her mother into the next room.

"Shut the door," she whispered, excitedly; "oh, now listen, listen, mamma. I never had so much money of my own before. It is my very own, isn't it? I earned it, you know, and now you must tell me what I can get for Gracie; I want to spend it on her. Poor little Gracie! She has so few pleasures! And she has been so good and kind, if you only knew! She has never ceased to be encouraging about my work, and I don't think she ever remembers one little bit that she—that she isn't as strong as we are."

Mrs. Wyvern, bound by her promises, could only nod her head and say constrainedly, "Yes, my dear, yes"; but the next morning she accompanied Amy on a long and fatiguing quest in search of something undefined—a present for Gracie.

Up and down Piccadilly, past Regent Street, beyond Oxford Street, back into Bond Street, walked that weary pair; then into unknown streets and places where, finally, a tame and beautiful piping bullfinch—a marvellously trained and trilling bird, a very Mario amongst bullfinches—was fixed upon, housed in a new cage, and carried in Amelia's arms, as she and her mother jolted homewards in a four-wheeled cab.

The Professor saw nothing of his pupil that day; bullfinch-worship occupied the whole of the afternoon. And from henceforth Bully's cage was placed close beside the sick girl's couch, and Bully became her inseparable companion. She knew, though Amy did not know, whose savings had gone to purchase him; but she knew also whose affection had bought him thither. Her heart was full of love and gratitude as she lay, her blue eyes more lowly than ever in their tenderness, watching the tiny songster, who bent his shiny black head on one side, and trilled forth the melody of the sweet Thuringian folk-song, telling of "Treue Liebe":

"Ach, wie ist's möglich dann,
Dass ich dich lassen kann?
Hab' dich von Herzen lieb, das glaube mir!
Du hast die Seele mein
So ganz genommen ein,
Dass ich kein' andre Lieb'
Als dich allein!"

But Grace herself was about to leave him. Neither "true love," nor care, nor songs of bird, could keep her. She was on her way to a land of heavenly sweetness and song, beyond the light of moon and stars, beyond the rays of the Aurora Borealis, the poetry of which had taken such a strange hold on her youthful imagination.

She spoke of it to Douglas M'Huish once, when she happened to be alone with him.

"You and Amy must go North some day," she said, "and be happy, quite happy together; and when you journey across the moors and you see before you, far away, those beautiful shining rays, you will think of me somehow with the Aurora, won't you, Douglas?"

"My little sister," answered, Douglas tremulously, as he clasped her hand in his, and kissed it reverently.

It was her beloved hour of twilight when she died; she passed away with scarce a sigh. There was no more sorrow nor sadness in her death than there had been in her bright and unselfish life. She bade Douglas lift her in his arms, and carry her to the window. It was during a heavy snowstorm; large flakes of snow were falling rapidly; the street, the passers-by, the roofs of the houses, the very world seemed white, spite of the deepening darkness.

"Amy," called the child, "come and see the snow. It must be beautiful in the North. Mother,

are you there? Ah, listen to Bully! Mother," and she drew her mother down, close to her own little chill face. "Mother, remember—you will never tell."

Then she dropped back in the arms of her brother Douglas. That was the end.

By-and-by, after several sorrowful months had gone past, Grace's words came true. Amelia married Douglas M'Huish, and, travelling with him to the far North, visited the home of his fathers and wandered with him, hand in hand, across the purple moors. Later on, they returned to London to settle down, each to work and bring grist to the mill, for Amelia gradually learnt to make her bandits less fierce in aspect, and less blue in complexion.

Meanwhile, during the young folks' absence, in her house in the dreary London street Mrs. Wyvern lived her lonely life. And when her pet bullfinch piped to her his plaintive Thuringian love-song:

"Ach, wie ist's möglich dann,
Dass ich dich lassen kann?"

Mrs. Wyvern laid aside her knitting, and folded her hands, and listened, whilst burning tears coursed slowly down her cheeks. But never, at any time, did she reveal that tender little secret of Gracie's which she had promised not to tell.

LADY LINDSAY.

By permission of Messrs. A. & C. BLACK.

A LONDON VOLUNTARY.

SCHERZANDO.

Down through the ancient Strand
The Spirit of October, mild and boon
And sauntering, takes his way
This golden end of afternoon,
As though the corn stood yellow in all the land
And the ripe apples dropped to the harvest moon.

Lo! the round sun, half down the western slope—
Seen as along an unglazed telescope—
Lingers and lolls, loth to be done with day:
Gifting the long, lean, lanky street
And its abounding confluences of being
With aspects generous and bland:
Making a thousand harnesses to shine
As with new ore from some enchanted mine,
And every horse's coat so full of sheen
He looks new tailored, and every 'bus feels clean,
And never a hansom but is worth the feeing;
And every jeweller within the pale
Offers a real Arabian Night for sale;
And even the roar
Of the strong streams of toil that pause and pour

Eastward and westward sounds suffused—
 Seems as it were bemused
 And blurred, and like the speech
 Of lazy seas upon a lotus-eating beach—
 With this enchanted lustrousness,
 This mellow magic, that (as a man's cares
 Brings back to some faded face beloved before
 A heavenly shadow of the grace it wore
 Ere the poor eyes were minded to beseech)
 Old things transfigures, and you hail and bless;
 Their looks of long-lapsed loveliness once more;
 Till the sedate and mannered elegance
 Of Clement's is all tintured with romance;
 The while the fanciful, formal, finicking charm
 Of Bride's, that madrigal in stone,
 Glows flushed and warm
 And beauteous with a beauty not its own;
 And the high majesty of Paul's
 Uplifts a voice of living light, and calls—
 Calls to his millions to behold and see
 How goodly this his London Town can be!

For earth and sky and air
 Are golden everywhere,
 And golden with a gold so suave and fine
 The looking on it lifts the heart like wine.
 Trafalgar Square
 (The fountains volleying golden glaze)
 Gleams like an angel-market. High aloft
 Over his couchant Lions in a haze
 Shimmering and bland and soft,
 A dust of chrysoprase,
 Our Sailor takes the golden gaze
 Of the saluting sun, and flames superb
 As once he flamed it on his ocean round.
 The dingy dreariness of the picture-place,
 Turned very nearly bright,
 Takes on a certain dismal grace,
 And shows not all a scandal to the ground.
 The very blind man pottering on the kerb,
 Among the posies and the ostrich feathers,
 And the rude voices touched with all the weathers
 Of all the varying year,
 Shares in the universal alms of light.
 The windows, with their fleeting, flickering fires,
 The height and spread of frontage shining sheer,
 The glistering signs, the rejoicing roofs and
 spires—
 'Tis El Dorado—El Dorado plain,
 The golden city! And when a girl goes by,
 Look! as she turns her glancing head,
 A curl of gold is floated from her ear!
 Golden, all golden! In a golden glory,
 Long lapsing down a golden coasted sky,
 The day not dies but seems
 Dispersed in wafts and drifts of gold, and shed
 Upon a past of golden song and story
 And memories of gold and golden dreams.

W. E. HENLEY.

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THE MAN AT MADRAS.

[AFTER MR. RUDYARD KIPLING.] •

SCENE.—MRS. MAYNARD'S house at Simla, and that lady seated in her boudoir. Enter MRS. HAWKSBEE hastily.

MRS. HAWKSBEE. My dear Mary! .Consume me! Comfort me! Have you been to Peliti's to-day? Produce chocolate—indeed, I could almost do with a peg! I've terrible news!

MRS. MAYNARD. "One at a time, gentlemen, please; you'll all be served," as the parrot who had been brought up in a public-house said to the starlings that were pecking at him.

MRS. HAW. Mary! None of your gibes! This is serious.

MRS. MAY. It must be to bring you here so early. Take off your finery, and tell me all about it.

MRS. HAW [*tragically*]. Mary, I was insulted last night!

MRS. MAY. How interesting! Who was it? The Mussuck, or the General—the champagne always makes him odiously affectionate.

MRS. HAW. Neither! Guess again.

MRS. MAY. Not the Hawley boy?

MRS. HAW. Mary! I'm ashamed of you. *That* innocent!

MRS. MAY. Oh! it's astonishing what innocents are capable of. But come! who was the happy man?

MRS. HAW. Mary, I won't be chaffed. Happy man, indeed! The audacious wretch was—was the Long Civilian!

MRS. MAY. The Long Civilian! Fanny, you don't mean it! Honest injun!

MRS. HAW. It's a fact. Isn't it monstrous? One is decently civil to a man, and he breaks out in this way.

MRS. MAY. "Decently civil!" Ye gods! Listen to her!

MRS. HAW. Yes, only decently civil. Come, Mary, you can't say I encouraged the Long Civilian.

MRS. MAY. It depends upon what you call encouragement, my dear. At any rate, you contrive to make decent civility go a long way.

MRS. HAW. As how? Question me. I'll own up.

MRS. MAY. Well, I suppose you let him talk "by the hour all about himself, and said it was "so interesting"?

MRS. HAW. Of course, my dear. One does that with them all.

MRS. MAY. Oh, indeed! And in return does one confide to them all that that is something quite new to be understood—

MRS. HAW. Oh! well—

MRS. MAY. Wait a minute. And when they all walk beside one's rickshaw with their hands on it,

do we put a hand on the hands of them all—quite by accident, don't-cher-know?

Mrs. HAW. Stop! stop, Mary! you are too bad. But I confess I did tell the Long Civilian that John and I had not many things in common.

Mrs. MAY. Just so; and what did he say?

Mrs. HAW. Well—he seemed pleased.

Mrs. MAY. Ah! They all do, I suppose. And what else?

Mrs. HAW. Well, he rather made fun of John being so far away, while I was lonely up here.

Mrs. MAY. "Lonely" she calls it!

Mrs. HAW. Be quiet, Mary, or I won't tell you any more;—and he always now calls John the Man at Madras.

Mrs. MAY. Does he, indeed? A charming way in which to refer to a husband before his wife. Now, Fanny, you *have* owned up. And my opinion of your decent civility is, that it bears a suspicious resemblance to a desperate flirtation.

Mrs. HAW. Call it what you like. At all events, I've been punished if I *did* encourage him.

Mrs. MAY. Poor thing! Tell me all about it. I always warn girls to fight shy of civilians. I believe they plough the fields with them in Lower Bengal.

Mrs. HAW. Well, at the ball last night, you must know, I gave him several dances.

Mrs. MAY. And sat out as many more. I know the program.

Mrs. HAW. And he seemed rather excited.

Mrs. MAY. Champagne?

Mrs. HAW. [*indignantly*]. Certainly not.

Mrs. MAY. I beg pardon; I only asked. Then I suppose it was the memory of the pleasant bridle-paths round Prospect Hill, and that last moonlight picnic at Seepee. Those things *do* turn their heads.

Mrs. HAW. I don't know what did it; but he got rather affectionate.

Mrs. MAY. I daresay. You are looking very "crummy," as the Major calls it. What did you do?

Mrs. HAW. Do! Of course I withered him. Solemnly warned him that such conduct was abominable.

Mrs. MAY. Solemnly warned him! You are quite *sure* you didn't say it in a "You-are-a-very-naughty-boy-but-I'll-never-forgive-you-if-you-don't-do-it-again" sort of way?

Mrs. HAW. No, I didn't; I was angry.

Mrs. MAY. And what then?

Mrs. HAW. Why, I can hardly tell you. The wretch put his arm round me and kissed me, and said, "Hang it, Lotty, you weren't so starchy in old days."

Mrs. MAY. Good gracious! But I don't understand. Why, Lotty, when your name is Fanny? and what were the old days?

Mrs. HAW. Ah! That's just it. [*Solemnly*]. Mary, I have a history.

Mrs. MAY [*aside*]. I always thought so. [*Aloud*]. Really, dear?

Mrs. HAW. You wouldn't have guessed it, would you?

Mrs. MAY. Of course not, dear.

Mrs. HAW. Well, once upon a time I was in the chorus at the Frivolity, and Lotty Morton was my stage name.

Mrs. MAY. My gracious!—I mean, very natural, my dear.

Mrs. HAW. Now, Mary, there are chorus girls and chorus girls. I was very fond of fun and flirtation, and went out to supper with half a dozen girls and men; but I never was like the other sort of chorus girl—you understand?

Mrs. MAY. Perfectly, dear.

Mrs. HAW. But at the same time, John—

Mrs. MAY. The Man at Madras, I understand.

Mrs. HAW. John did not, does not, know. I met him when I was staying with a very quiet aunt at Southsea. And John is rather serious, and if this horrid Long Civilian tells him anything—and I expect him every day—it will be a pretty business for me.

Mrs. MAY. But how did the Long Civilian know you?

Mrs. HAW. Oh! it seems he met me one night years ago at a supper given by a cousin of his. I didn't remember him in the least; but it appears he knew me at once, and that explains several things in his manner which puzzled me.

Mrs. MAY. A little too appreciative of the decent civility—eh, Fanny?

Mrs. HAW. Mary, you are horrid, and I expected you to sympathise. You have had some narrow shaves yourself.

Mrs. MAY [*calmly*]. I have, dear; and as in the pauses of dance, play, and Gymkhana, every one in Simla has had shaves, as you call them, my withers are comparatively unwrung.

Mrs. HAW. But what am I to do?

Mrs. MAY. Go on playing up to the Long Civilian, and he won't tell for fear of your crying off.

Mrs. MAY. But supposing he tries to kiss me again?

Mrs. MAY. Let him.

Mrs. HAW. Mary, you are positively immoral!

Mrs. MAY. Not at all, dear. One has to put up with such trifles.

Mrs. HAW. And when John comes? He may arrive at any moment.

Mrs. MAY. That *might* complicate matters I admit; but by that time this wanderer from his paddy-fields should be well schooled.

Mrs. HAW. But John?

Mrs. MAY. John? Surely by this time John is too well trained to shy at the Long Civilian?

Mrs. HAW. Ah, well, it's a muddle any way you look at it.

MRS. MAY. Not at all. Pluck up your courage. Shall I take John off your hands?

MRS. HAW. Mary, you are incorrigible!

[MRS. MAYNARD is looking out of the window.]

MRS. MAY. Why, I do declare the Long Civilian is coming here.

MRS. HAW. You don't say so! [*Bitterly.*] To tell you the story, I suppose.

MRS. MAY. And a man with him! Short—

MRS. HAW. And a red beard?

MRS. MAY. Yes; and a pair of legs that don't quite match.

MRS. HAW. John! [*Rushes to window.*] Oh, this is awful!

[*Sinks on couch.*]

MRS. MAY. And so they know each other! It strikes me that, for his own peace of mind, John had better have remained the Man at Madras.

H. SAVILE CLARKE.

MY BROTHER HENRY.

STRICTLY speaking I never had a brother Henry, and yet I cannot say that Henry was an impostor. He came into existence in a curious way, and I can think of him now without malice as a child of smoke. The first I heard of Henry was at Pettigrew's house, which is in a London suburb, so conveniently situated that I can go there and back in one day. I was testing some new Cabanas, I remember, when Pettigrew remarked that he had been lunching with a man who knew my brother Henry. Not having any brother but Alexander I felt that Pettigrew had mistaken the name. "Oh no," Pettigrew said; "he spoke of Alexander too." Even this did not convince me, and I asked my host for his friend's name. Scudamour was the name of the man, and he had met my brothers Alexander and Henry years before in Paris. Then I remembered Scudamour, and I probably frowned, for I myself was my own brother Henry. I distinctly recalled Scudamour meeting Alexander and me in Paris, and calling me Henry, though my name begins with J. I explained the mistake to Pettigrew, and there, for the time being, the matter rested. However, I had by no means heard the last of Henry.

Several times afterwards I heard from various persons that Scudamour wanted to meet me because he knew my brother Henry. At last we did meet, in Jimmy's chambers; and, almost as soon as he saw me, Scudamour asked where Henry was now. This was precisely what I feared. I am a man who always looks like a boy. There are few persons of my age in London who retain their boyish appearance as long as I have done; indeed, this is the curse of my life. Though I am approaching the age of thirty, I pass for twenty; and I have observed old gentlemen frown at my precocity when I said

a good thing, or helped myself to a second glass of wine. There was, therefore, nothing surprising in Scudamour's remark, that, when he had the pleasure of meeting Henry, Henry must have been about the age that I had now reached. All would have been well had I explained the real state of affairs to this annoying man; but, unfortunately for myself, I loathe entering upon explanations to anybody about anything. When I ring for a time-table, and William John brings coals instead I accept the coals as a substitute. Much, then, did I dread a discussion with Scudamour, his surprise when he heard that I was Henry, and his comments on my youthful appearance. There was no likelihood of meeting Scudamour again, so the easiest way to get rid of him seemed to be to humour him. I therefore told him that Henry was in India, married, and doing well. "Remember me to Henry when you write him," was Scudamour's last remark to me that evening.

A few weeks later some one tapped me on the shoulder in Oxford Street. It was Scudamour. "Heard from Henry?" he asked. I said I had heard by the last mail. "Anything particular in the letter?" I felt it would not do to say that there was nothing particular in a letter which had come all the way from India, so I hinted that Henry was having trouble with his wife. By this I meant that her health was bad; but he took it up in another way, and I did not set him right. "Ah, ah!" he said, shaking his head sagaciously, "I'm sorry to hear that. Poor Henry!" "Poor old boy!" was all I could think of replying. "How about the children?" Scudamour asked. "Oh, the children," I said, with what I thought presence of mind, "are coming to England." "To stay with Alexander?" he asked. My answer was that Alexander was expecting them by the middle of next month; and eventually Scudamour went away muttering, "Poor Henry!" In a month or so we met again. "No word of Henry's getting leave of absence?" asked Scudamour. I replied shortly that Henry had gone to live in Bombay, and would not be home for years. He saw that I was brusque, so what does he do but draw me aside for a quiet explanation. "I suppose," he said, "you are annoyed because I told Pettigrew that Henry's wife had run away from him. The fact is, I did it for your good. You see I happened to make a remark to Pettigrew about your brother Henry, and he said that there was no such person. 'Of course I laughed at that, and pointed out not only that I had the pleasure of Henry's acquaintance, but that you and I had a talk about the old fellow every time we met. 'Well,' Pettigrew said, 'this is a most remarkable thing; for he,' meaning you, 'said to me in this very room, sitting in that very chair, that Alexander was his only brother.' I saw that Pettigrew resented you concealing the existence of your brother Henry from him, so I thought the most friendly thing I could do was to tell him

that your reticence was doubtless due to the unhappy state of poor Henry's private affairs. Naturally, in the circumstances you did not want to talk about Henry." I shook Scudamour by the hand, telling him that he had acted judiciously; but if I could have stabbed him in the back at that moment I dare say I would have done it.

I did not see Scudamour again for a long time, for I took care to keep out of his way; but I heard first from him and then of him. One day he wrote to me saying that his nephew was going to Bombay, and would I be so good as to give the youth an introduction to my brother Henry? He also asked me to dine with him and his nephew. I declined the dinner, but I sent the nephew the required note of introduction to Henry. The next I heard of Scudamour was from Pettigrew. "By the way," said Pettigrew, "Scudamour is in Edinburgh at present." I trembled, for Edinburgh is where Alexander lives. "What has taken him there?" I asked, with assumed carelessness. Pettigrew believed it was business. "But," he added, "Scudamour asked me to tell you that he meant to call on Alexander, as he was anxious to see Henry's children." A few days afterwards I had a telegram from Alexander, who generally uses this means of communication when he corresponds with me. "Do you know a man Scudamour? Reply," was what Alexander said. I thought of answering that we had met a man of that name when we were in Paris; but, after consideration, I replied boldly: "Know no one of name of Scudamour."

About two months ago I passed Scudamour in Regent Street, and he scowled at me. This I could have borne if there had been no more of Henry; but I knew that Scudamour was now telling everybody about Henry's wife. By-and-by I got a letter from an old friend of Alexander's, asking me if there was any truth in a report that Alexander was going to Bombay. Soon afterwards Alexander wrote to me saying he had been told by several persons that I was going to Bombay. In short, I saw that the time had come for killing Henry. So I told Pettigrew that Henry had died of fever, deeply regretted; and asked him to be sure to tell Scudamour, who had always been interested in the deceased's welfare. Pettigrew afterwards told me that he had communicated the sad intelligence to Scudamour. "How did he take it?" I asked. "Well," Pettigrew said, reluctantly, "he told me that when he was up in Edinburgh he did not get on well with Alexander. But he expressed great curiosity as to Henry's children." "Ah," I said, "the children were both drowned in the Forth; a sad affair—we can't bear to talk of it." I am not likely to see much of Scudamour again, nor is Alexander. Scudamour now goes about saying that Henry was the only one of us he really liked.

J. M. BARRIE.

By permission of the Author.

NOTTMAN.

THAT was Nottman waving at me,
But the steam fell down, so you could not see;
He is out to-day with the fast express,
And running a mile in the minute, I guess.

Danger? none in the least, for the way
Is good, though the curves are sharp, as you say,
But bless you, when trains are a little behind,
They thunder around them—a match for the wind.

Nottman himself is a devil to drive,
But cool and steady, and ever alive
To whatever danger is looming in front,
When a train has run hard to gain time for a shunt.

But he once got a fear, though, that shook him
with pain,
Like sleepers beneath the weight of a train.
I remember the story well, for, you see,
His stoker, Jack Martin, told it to me.

Nottman had sent down the wife for a change
To the old folks living at Riverly Grange,
A quiet, sleepy sort of a town,
Save when the engines went up and down.

For close behind it the railway ran
In a mile of a straight if a single span;
Three bridges were over the straight, and between
Two the distant signal was seen.

She had with her a boy—a nice little chit
Full of romp and mischief, and childish wit,
And every time that we thunder'd by,
Both were out on the watch for Nottman and I.

"Well, one day," said Jack, "on our journey
down,
Coming round on the straight at the back of the town,
I saw right ahead, in front of our track,
In the haze, on the rail, something dim-like and black.

"I looked over at Nottman, but ere I could speak,
He shut off the steam, and, with one wild shriek,
A whistle took to the air with a bound;
But the object ahead never stir'd at the sound.

"In a moment he flung himself down on his knee,
Lent over the side of the engine to see,
Took one look, then sprung up, crying, breathless
and pale,
'Brake, Jack, it is some one asleep on the rail!'

"The rear brakes were whistled on in a trice,
While I screw'd on the tender brake firm as a vice.
But still we tore on with this terrible thought
Sending fear to our hearts—'Can we stop her or not?'

"I took one look again, then sung out to my mate,
 'We can never draw up, we have seen it too late.'
 When, sudden and swift, like the change in a dream,
 Nottman drew back the lever and flung on the steam.

"The great wheels stagger'd and span with the strain,
 While the spray from the steam fell around us like rain,
 But we slacken'd our speed, till we saw with a wild
 Throb at the heart, right before us—a child!

"It was lying asleep on the rail, with no fear
 Of the terrible death that was looming so near;
 The sweat on us both broke as cold as the dew
 Of death as we question'd—'What can we do?'

"It was done—swift as acts that take place in a dream—
 Nottman rushed to the front and knelt down on the beam,
 Put one foot in the couplings; the other he kept
 Right in front of the wheel for the child that still slept.

"I stood close behind him, and, standing could feel
 Underneath the wild roar of the merciless wheel,
 And I knew—and this thought made me catch at my breath,
 That the very next moment would be life or death.

"'Saved!' I burst forth, my heart leaping with pride,
 For one touch of the foot sent the child to the side,
 But Nottman look'd up, his lips white as with foam,
 'My God, Jack,' he cried, 'it's my own little Tom!'

"He shrunk, would have slipp'd, but one grasp of my hand
 Held him firm till the engine was brought to a stand,
 Then I heard from behind a shriek take to the air,
 And I knew that the voice of a mother was there.

"The boy was all right, had got off with a scratch:
 He had crept through the fence in his frolic to watch
 For his father; but, wearied with mischief and play,
 Had fallen asleep on the rail where he lay.

"For days after that on our journey down,
 Ere we came to the straight at the back of the town,
 As if the signal were up with its gleam
 Of red, Nottman always shut off the steam."

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

MR. SPROUTS'S COURTSHIP.

LAIST Munday was our weddin' day, and we 'ad what the old majur 'ud call a s'lect sercle o' friends in the hevenin'; for they may talk as they like about pride, but yer can't hob-nob with heverybody, yer persition won't allow it. I may do bizness with a cove as hawks vinkles in a basket; but what wood all the chaps with barrurs say if I asked them to mete 'im at my 'ouse? I may be thrown in contact with a "I am starvin'," or any other artis in sersicity; but how would the "Beadle Exterminator to the London Vestreys" like to drink out of the same set o' tee-kups with 'im in Kolly-flour-alley? As that old gent sez in Parliament, "If property 'ave its dooties, it 'ave also its rites."

Lor' bless us! as we grows older these universary days seems to kum twice a yere, an' all as 'as bin seems to have happened yesterday, and all as is to be looks as if it wos comin' to-morrer. There don't seem to be no good distance o' time either afore yer or beind yer. Wercas, when you're a cheeld, yer seems as if you had lived for ever an' wos goin' to live for evermore.

Betsi wanted to send out kards, like them pore critters in the skwares; but, says I, "let's sho' ourselves independunt on 'em, and do it in our own way." So I jest sez to wun or two in plane Hinglish, "Vill yer shake a teekup at our drum next Munday, old pal?" an' they sez, "Like a journeyman 'atter," an the thing was done.

Wod a nice party. There wos Mr. Grimes, assistant to a dust kontraktur—he ain't one of them low broots as carrys the stuff up the laddur, but wun as shovels it in the basket, an' his wife a distribbiter of dairy produse. Then there wos Ferritt, the dawg fansier, an' his sun as can rite, an' kill rats agin' time with any dawg in the vurld, and Signur Bagshot, as owns a Karryvan of Curosetees, likewise his wife, an' the jiant, and the Blud Drinker of Peroo, from the 'sho', as is not at all prowd in privit life, an' likes beer. Assin the Dworf, supposed to be the only sun of the Sultin of Turkey, now in Hingland, kum in the hurly part o' the hevenin, but, as 'e begun a kryin' cause ve adn't got nō katsmeat, we sent 'im away, and finished up verry kumfurtabl' amongst hour-selves.

I shall never forgit our coartin'. Lor' bless me what a gay yung feller I wos when I fust knoo Betsi. My 'air was kurl'd every blessid mornin'

with bakky pipe, an' I thought o' nothin' but fashion and vanitis. I'd four rows of hobnales in my best boots, an' wore a wesket every bleissid day in the week, let alone Sundays. If ever there was a sho' of dawgs my puppis karried off the prize; an' thay vos puppis! You kood a put 'em in a 'arf quarten glarse, an' they luv'd me like a farthur. If ever there was a friendly lead, Joe opend with the fust song. If there was a raffle, Joe put his name atop of the list, an' 'ad the fust throw. Ven 'e fed his rabbits the gals used to look over the railings and visper "pretty bunny," meanin' pretty Joe. Wen 'e went out burd-ketchin' tha used to bother 'im fur pressints, an' made pets o' the burds; and wen he tuk vun on 'em to the play thare was no stint o' gingur-beer an' mutton-pies, for eels 'adn't kum up. But I never used to think o' marryin'; an' at last thay hall got to callin' me "Batchilur Jo," for, as the fellur sez in the book, "My 'art was adermint agin the distrakshuns o' the fair."

But it warn't to last for ever; for vun day I vos goin' 'ome promiskus-like, in the evenin' at nite, when I kum plump on a Jak-in-the-Grene in a hy-street, an' I vos standin' as yoo mite be, lookin' at the green workin' up and down, more like a barril o' beer fomentin' than anythink else, when up cum the Queen of Buty with the ladel, an' begun to darnse.

Yer mite 'ave knock'd me down with a sledge 'ammer, for of all the luvly things I ever see she vos one. She koodn't have weighed less than eleven stun, an' she 'ad a arm an' fist as could have flored a coaly, an' vos kuvvered vith musling and red boots like the beins of another vorld. The jentle excitement o' the 'op 'ad given a glo' of warmth to 'er cheeks and nose, and d'rekly I see 'er I felt a sumthing krackin' hinside an' I knew my 'art vos touched.

"Give us a copper," sez she.

"A copper," I sez, "annythink, everythink; here's tuppense."

"Is that all?" sez she, smilin'.

"I have no more," sez I; "stop, does yer mother smoke?"

"She do," sez she.

"Then take my baccy-box," I sez, an' I give her half-an-ounce of burd's-eye an' a coloured pipe.

Thay vent off, an' I followed an' see 'er dansin' agin an' agin vith the Lord in the cock'd 'at and green sash, an' makin' belev to kiss her hand and offer 'er luv to 'im till I felt the fires of jellursy cussin' thro' my branes, tho' I mite 'av 'ad the sense to see as it was only a purfeshunal detachment.

I follered 'er to 'er fathur's door, as vos a koke merchunt ov the name of Chigley. I see 'em put the green to bed. I found out 'er name vos Betsi. I waived a last adoo to 'er as she stood neer the coke scales. I vent 'ome.

But not to sleep. I fed the rabbits an' the

pijjins, an' give the pups a hapurth o' milk an' put 'em to bed. All nite long I vos tossin' about. I got up an' wacked the puppies for a change. I tride to teach my starlin' to vissel "Elizurbuth Chigley," but it vos only the nite before as I teeched 'im to larn "Ratketchur Joe," out o' komplement to a friend, and 'a mixt the two together, and did nothin' but vissel Ratketchur Chigley till I felt as I could ha' pisened 'im.

It wen't on for sum days, an' every 'our I got worse an worse. I took no pride in dres, the peck of my cap vos pretty nigh as often on my forehead as it vos over my left ear. I 'ad to take two drinks to finish a pot of 'evvy, my 'air got out o' kurl, I kouldn't vissel, I kouldn't shy a skittel-ball. I 'adn't the strength to skin a rabbit, I vos off my bakky, I vos late on markit days, I spekkilated in koke an' lost, I skwandered my kapital, I 'ated the rat-pit, I didn't 'ave a fite for three weeks. The pups groo up without 'avin' thare tales kut, the kat fought the chikkings, the rabbits got uffy, an' one on 'em 'ung hisselt through the bars of his 'utch; and in the mist of it all the vite mouse vos konfined, and the fathur seemed to ask me 'ow 'e vos to git sop for 'is childrun.

This brought me too. "I must do suthin' or die," sez I; "I owe a dooty to this ere famerly o' innersents;" an', as luck would have it, I hit upon a idea.

There vos a haredressur in the street as had a assistant named Alfonsur de Makassur, a puffek swell, as wore Wellintun boots, an' could spell "satisfakshun" like a dixonery, likewise 'e could rite ornimentale, and did all the cards for the vine. So I vent to him.

I told 'im wot vos the mattu'r, an' sez 'e, "You have my symperthy," he sez, "I'm in the tender sittivation," sez he. "Ow can I help son?" "Why," I sez, "I wants yer to put an everythink I tells yer in ornimental rital, an' fol the lines. Say as I feels my 'art sl' to nuthin' as if it vos bein' biled, an' enny 'e else yer think of, an' I'll give yer thruppence's sadce for every idea as yer can rite to her."

"Rite to who?" sez 'e. "Elizurbuth," sez I. "Also the cognomen of my idol," sez y! "I then 'e rit me the follerin' note:—

"Beloved yet buteful unknown! In ven the mornin' brakes my awaken'd soul w'ing its flite to yer lattiss and chirrup "Gittup!" and at eve we'll sit beneath the archin vines, and wonder w' yer fathur eats 'is heart in sollitood, and skatturs yer buty to the winds. Ah, Elizurbuth, w'fore art thou Betsi? Is this a dagger w'ich I see before me? and wot's in a name?—Yourn, as you uses 'im,

"Jos. F.

"N.B. All letters to be prepaed."

"Wot is the price o' that?" I sez.

"Eight pence," 'e sez, "leastways if yer have it

rit like printin'. The quotashuns from the poets is tuppense a piece, and the ritin' tuppense."

But when I got to the post office I see a compleat letter riter for sale for both sexes, with forms of address for members o' Parliament, marchints, ambassadurs, and lawyers, an' a redly rekner, on the prinseeples of sound merrality, and I bot it.

The very next day I gits a letter from 'er as fine as if it 'ad been copied out of a letter riter, only I knew as no one else but me wos u' to sich a dodge. This vos it:—

"Letter 23.—To a lover on rejectin' 'is soot.

"Deer Cur,—If in the freedom o' konversashun enjined by the konvenshunalitys o' sosiete I 'ave led yer to believ as the detachmint you express is resprokled, I ask yer pardun, for candy compels me to acknowledge that the utmost solicitations of ingenooity will avail you nought as my art is another's an' my Fathur, who is a retired merchant of wealthy habbits (here put okkipation of Fathur, if any), could ill sustain the bereevement of wun he 'as trained with peculiar care. Madenly modesty prevents me from addin' more.—I am, Cur, with full 'steem, yours, "ELIZURBUTH CHIGLEY."

D'rekly I got this I sent the follerin', which I red out o' the buk, an' improved with bits o' my own:—

"From a modist but unfor'nate young gentleman.

"Deer Elizurbuth,—My Art is a wolkaner. My feelins' is whirlpools, My dawg is dead, Woises seems to wisper 'Chigley' in the silent nite, Yer silf-like form flotes before me in vishuns like a bing of hair, and I have no peas in my bed.—Yer cadyunt servint, "JOSEF SPROUTS."

my the next vun wos from her as folows:—

deatletter 25.—To the same on the same from

ad! I Forgit yer unhappy passion. Try to spot disturbances by furrin travil, and in the etanch buty of the city of the Casars obliviate my trant charms. For u a horrible path is hopen an deny that I am hindifferent to yure menny llent quality's of 'ed and 'art would be mere Jacon. I 'ave watched yure career, and shall co y to do so wen the reword's of a lofty ambition will be youn.

"(Here no name). "ELIZURBUTH CHIGLEY.

"Addre Coke-shed, Ash-lane, Spitalfields."

I see this art o' game vos no go, and I mite ha' gone on lik this for hever. Besides, I vos tired o' starvin' myself, so I begun a noo move in the follerin'arms:—

"Ps.—This is to give notis that I vill neither eat (drink anythink till yer've promised to be mia). Therefor, if yer holds bout hobstinit, you'll 'ave appere on the hinkwest, and likewise be awad at nite by the ghost of yer humble servint, "JOSEF SPROUTS."

D'rekly I'd posted that I went an' lade in about a pound o' stake an' some hevvy, and felt considerably refresh'd. In four days' time I went to her fathur's orfis to make a larst appeal, and found her weighin' out a sak o' coke.

D'rekly I see 'er I pulls a horful long fase as if I vos gnawed to piecis, an' I sez sollumly—

"Is your name Chigley?" sez I.

"Rayther," sez she.

"An' mian," sez I, "is Sprouts. Do yer still luv my 'ated rille?"

"Yes," she says, "I vushups 'im."

"Wot's 'is flitin' weight?" I sez.

"He's a purfesshunel person—a harédressur," sez she.

"Is thare no 'ope?" sez I.

"How much do yer git a weke?" sez she.

"Five-an'-twenty shillins in the season," sez I.

"No hope wotever," sez she.

"Thank you kindly, Miss Chigley," I sez. "I will not keep you any longur. I am goin' to 'op the twig. I am slowly wastin' away with 'unger. I weigh'd twelve stum three days ago; I now ways four. Good-bye, and exsept the blessin' of a 'ungry 'art."

I had 'ardly got a dozen steps away wen she kum runnin' arter me, and throo 'erself on my veskit, and sez she, "Josef, beluvid Josef, if you luv me better than vittles, yer 'art indeeds is troo. I was only tryin' yer. I am yourn, thian for ever. Come hin, an' pour out the story o' yer love, an' have some herrin'."

"Will yer be a mother to my puppeys?" I sez.

"I vill, I vill," sez she, an' then our noses met, an' then our lips, an' it vos settled.

"May I wait upon yer fathur?" sez I.

"He's hout coal-vippin'," sez she, but in the evenin' I giv 'im a quarten o' rum an' got his consent.

We wos tide up that very day three weeks. The colevipper spared no expens in fittin' out 'is child. The trooso was dun hup in a sak in the washhouse, an' there vos everythink the hye could desire. Three yards of ile-kloth for table-kivers, an' three pares o' noo stockkins, an' three darned, a shawl, a female pare o' bluchers for market-days, two nitekaps and a sta'-bone, a kuart pot with a false bottom for bizness, and a full-sized one for pishur, an' too pare of yaller boots, and Bonnycastle's Algebray for readin' on wet days.

D'rekly we got bak from church I rushed horff madly up vun street an' down anuther in the 'appyniss of my 'art. I felt ubuv everything. I floted along like a bladder. I felt a longin' to do sumthin' unnatural, unkommon, danjerus, so I went to wash myself and to be shaved. Alfonsor De Makassar wos reedin' Lord Bakun's "Don Jooin" wen I rushed in.

"Hooray! hooray!" I sez, "I've wun 'er, she is mian, she is mian."

"Moderit yer transports," sez 'e, "who's yourn?"

"Betsi," I sez, "Betsi."

"Wot Betsi?" sez 'e.

"Betsi Chigley," I sez, "the coal-vipper's child."
"It's false," 'e skremed, "thou wiper, thou
sarpint. She is not thian. I 'av 'ad 'vowels of
luv from 'er own raven lips. I 'av given 'er two
pots o' permatum and a pair of sizzers. She is
mian by hevery humeing tie."

It was too troo. My Betsi wos 'is Betsi, and
'is as wos wos mian as is.

'E sharpened a razor with emfersis, wile a dark
frown lit hup 'is butifol 'ead of 'air.

"Did you say you wanted shavin'?" 'e sed,
tryin' to look karm, with a terribl' roll of 'is rite
hyeball.

"No," I sed; "forgiv' me; it wos a parsin'
weekniss. I am better now. I wish to be just,"
I sez, "I think I owes yer eight pence; aksept a
shilling, an' wen yer look at the ol' fourpence,
think sumtimes of Josef Sprouts. Farewel."

"I will not touch yer filthy gold," he sed, puttin'
it hin in veskit pokkit, "I will chace thee till
deth."

I flew to 'er fathur's manshun, and he pursood.
Neddi's granfather wos harness'd to a noo barrer
at the dore vaitin' to take hus to Witechapil, were
we wos to spend the 'unnymoon.

Betsi ad fin'shed kleenin' 'erself, an' all vos
reddy wen we got there.

"Unmanly woman!" skremed De Makassur,
"wot is the kause of this rejekshun?"

"You wos too reg'lar at meels," sed Betsi.

"Listen," 'e sez, "I 'ad tak'n a superior shavin'
shop, and I shall 'ave to forfit the depozzit. May
the cuss of a blighted bein', a 'airdressur's kuss,
fall upon yer 'ed, and make yer bawld before yer
time. Ma' the orte tyrant as 'ave stolin yer, whip
yer with unkindness worse than yer fathur whips
his coals. May yer 'ave no children, 'an ven
they're vaksinated ma' it nevvur take. Ma' yer
'ave no joy in wakin', and may yer dreems always
be harnted by the memmury of Makassur's cuss."

Arter that the trooso vos put in the barrer, the
naburs cheered, the cole-wipper giv' us 'is blessin',
an' we druv off.

RICHARD WHITEING.

THE DEAD MOTHER.

I. •

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
Under the grass as I lay so deep,
As I lay asleep in my white death-serk
Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,
I waken'd up in the dead of night,
I waken'd up in my shroud o' white,
And I heard a cry from far away,
And I knew the voice of my daughter May
"Mother, mother, come hither to me!
Mother, mother, come hither and see!

Mother, mother, mother dear,
Another mother is sitting here:
My body is bruised, in pain I cry,
All night long on the straw I lie,
I thirst and hunger for drink and meat,
And mother, mother, to sleep were sweet!"
I heard the cry, though my grave was deep,
And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep

II.

I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
Up I rose from my grave so deep!
The earth was black, but overhead
The stars were yellow, the moon was red;
And I walk'd along all white and thin,
And lifted the latch and enter'd in.
I reach'd the chamber as dark as night,
And though it was dark my face was white:
"Mother, mother, I look on thee!
Mother, mother, you frighten me!
For your cheeks are thin and your hair is grey!"
But I smiled, and I kiss'd her fears away;
I smooth'd her hair and I sang a song,
And on my knee I rock'd her long.
"Oh mother, mother, sing low to me—
I am sleepy now, and I cannot see!"
I kiss'd her, but I could not weep,
And she went to sleep, she went to sleep.

III.

As we lay asleep, as we lay asleep,
My May and I, in our grave so deep,
As we lay asleep in the midnight mirk,
Under the shade of Our Lady's Kirk,
I waken'd up in the dead of night,
Though May my daughter lay worm and white,
And I heard the cry of the little one,
And I knew 'twas the voice of Ilugh my son:
"Mother, mother, come hither to me!
Mother, mother, come hither and see!
Mother, mother, mother dear,
Another mother is sitting here:
My body is bruised and my heart is sad,
But I speak my mind and call them bad;
I thirst and hunger night and day,
And were I strong I would fly away!"
I heard the cry, though my grave was deep,
And awoke from sleep, and awoke from sleep!

IV.

I awoke from sleep, I awoke from sleep,
Up I rose from my grave so deep,
The earth was black, but overhead
The stars were yellow, the moon was red
And I walk'd along all white and thin,
And lifted the latch, and enter'd in.
"Mother, mother, and art thou here?
I know your face, and I feel no fear;
Raise me, mother, and kiss my cheek,
For oh, I am weary and sore and weak."

I smooth'd his hair with a mother's joy,
And he laugh'd aloud, my own brave boy;
I raised and held him on my breast,
Sang him a song, and bade him rest.
"Mother, mother, sing low to me—
I am sleepy now and I cannot see!"
I kiss'd him, and I could not weep,
As he went to sleep, as he went to sleep.

V.

As I lay asleep, as I lay asleep,
With my girl and boy in my grave so deep,
As I lay asleep, I awoke in fear,
Awoke, but awoke not my children dear.
And heard a cry so low and weak
From a tiny voice that could not speak:
I heard the cry of a little one,
My bairn that could neither talk nor run,
My little, little one, uncared'st,
Starving for lack of the milk of the breast;
And I rose from sleep and enter'd in,
And found my little one pinch'd and thin,
And croon'd a song and hush'd its moan,
And put its lips to my white breast-bone;
And the red, red moon that lit the place
Went white to look at the little face,
And I kiss'd, and kiss'd, and I could not weep,
As it went to sleep, as it went to sleep.

VI.

As it lay asleep, as it lay asleep,
I set it down in the darkness deep,
Smooth'd its limbs and laid it out,
And drew the curtains round about;
Then into the dark, dark room I hied,
Where awake *he* lay, at the woman's side;
And though the chamber was black as night,
He saw my face, for it was so white!
I gazed in his eyes, and he shriek'd in pain,
And I knew he would never sleep again,
And back to my grave crept silently,
And soon my baby was brought to me;
My son and daughter beside me rest,
My little baby is on my breast:
Our bed is warm, and our grave is deep,
But he cannot sleep, he cannot sleep!

ROBERT BUCHANAN.

By permission of the Author.

THE ARCADIA MIXTURE.

ONE day, some weeks after we had left Scrymgeour's house-boat, I was alone in my rooms, very busy smoking, when William John entered with a telegram. It was from Scrymgeour, and said, "You have got me into a dreadful mess. Come down here first train."

Wondering what mess I could have got Scrymgeour into, I good-naturedly obeyed his summons, and soon I was smoking placidly on the deck of the house-boat, while Scrymgeour, sulled and nervous, tramped back and forward. I saw quickly that the only tobacco had something to do with his troubles, for he began by announcing that one evening soon after we left him he found that he had smoked all his Arcadia. He would have despatched the boy to London for it, but the boy had been all day in the village buying a loaf, and would not be back for hours. Cookham cigars Scrymgeour could not smoke; cigarettes he only endured if made from the Arcadia.

At Cookham he could only get tobacco that made him uncomfortable. Having recently begun to use a new pouch, he searched his pockets in vain for odd shreds of the Mixture to which he had so contemptibly become a slave. In a very bad temper he took to his dingey, vowing for a little while that he would violently break the chains that bound him to one tobacco, and afterwards, when he was restored to his senses, that he would jilt the Arcadia gradually. He had pulled some distance down the river, without regarding the Cliveden Woods, when he all but ran into a blaze of Chinese lanterns. It was a house-boat called—let us change its name to the *Heathen Chinee*. Staying his dingey with a jerk, Scrymgeour looked up, when a wonderful sight met his eyes. On the open window of an apparently empty saloon stood a round tin of tobacco, marked "Arcadia Mixture."

Scrymgeour sat gaping. The only sound to be heard, except a soft splash of water under the house-boat, came from the kitchen, where a servant was breaking crockery for supper. The romantic figure in the dingey stretched out his hand and then drew it back, remembering that there was a law against this sort of thing. He thought to himself, "If I were to wait until the owner returns, no doubt a man who smokes the Arcadia would feel for me." Then his fatal horror of explanations whispered to him, "The owner may be a stupid, garrulous fellow, who will detain you here half the night explaining your situation." Scrymgeour, I want to impress upon the reader, was, like myself, the sort of man who, if asked whether he did not think "In Memoriam" Mr. Browning's greatest poem, would say Yes, as the easiest way of ending the conversation. Obviously he would save himself trouble by simply annexing the tin. He seized it and rowed off.

Smokers, who know how tobacco develops the finer feelings, hardly require to be told what happened next. Suddenly Scrymgeour remembered that he was probably leaving the owner of the *Heathen Chinee* without any Arcadia Mixture. He at once filled his pouch, and, pulling softly back to the house-boat, replaced the tin on the window, his bosom swelling with the pride of

those who give presents. At the same moment a hand gripped him by the neck, and a girl, somewhere on deck, screamed.

Scrymgeour's captor, who was no other than the owner of the *Heathen Chinese*, dragged him fiercely into the house-boat and stormed at him for five minutes. My friend shuddered as he thought of the explanations to come when he was allowed to speak, and gradually he realised that he had been mistaken for some one else—apparently for some young blade who had been carrying on a clandestine flirtation with the old gentleman's daughter. It will take an hour, thought Scrymgeour, to convince him that I am not that person, and another hour to explain why I am really here. Then the weak creature had an idea: "Might not the simplest plan be to say that his surmises are correct, promise to give his daughter up, and row away as quickly as possible?" He began to wonder if the girl was pretty; but saw it would hardly do to say that he reserved his defence until he could see her.

"I admit," he said, at last, "that I admire your daughter; but she spurned my advances, and we parted yesterday for ever."

"Yesterday!"

"Or was it the day before?"

"Why, sir, I have caught you red-handed!"

"This is an accident," Scrymgeour explained, "and I promise never to speak to her again." Then he added as an after-thought, "however painful that may be to me."

Before Scrymgeour returned to his dingey he had been told that he would be drowned if he came near that house-boat again. As he sculled away he had a glimpse of the flirting daughter, whom he described to me briefly as being of such engaging appearance that six yards was a trying distance to be away from her.

"Here," thought Scrymgeour that night over a pipe of the Mixture, "the affair ends; though I daresay the young lady will call me terrible names when she hears that I have personated her lover. I must take care to avoid the father now, for he will feel that I have been fooling him. Perhaps I should have made a clean breast of it; but I do loathe explanations."

Two days afterwards Scrymgeour passed the father and daughter on the river. The lady said "Thank you," to him with her eyes, and, still more remarkable, the old gentleman bowed. Scrymgeour thought it over. "She is grateful to me," he concluded, "for drawing away suspicion from the other man, but what can have made the father so amiable? Suppose she has not told him that I am an impostor, he should still look upon me as a villain; and if she has told him, he should be still more furious. It is curious, but no affair of mine." Three times within the next few days he encountered the lady on the tow-path or elsewhere with a young gentleman of empty coun-

enance, who, he saw, must be the real Lothario. Once they passed him when he was in the shadow of a tree, and the lady was making pretty faces with a cigarette in her mouth. The house-boat *Heathen Chinese* lay but a short distance off; and Scrymgeour could see the owner gazing after his daughter placidly, a pipe between his lips. "He must be approving of her conduct now," was my friend's natural conclusion. Then one forenoon Scrymgeour travelled to town in the same compartment as the old gentleman, who was exceedingly frank, and made sly remarks about romantic young people who met by stealth when there was no reason why they should not meet openly. "What does he mean?" Scrymgeour asked himself, uneasily. He saw terribly elaborate explanations gathering, and shrank from them.

Then Scrymgeour was one day out in a punt, when he encountered the old gentleman in a canoe. The old man said, purple with passion, that he was on his way to pay Mr. Scrymgeour a business visit. "Oh, yes," he continued, "I know who you are; if I had not discovered you were a man of means I would not have let the thing go on, and now I insist on an explanation."

Explanations!

They made for Scrymgeour's house-boat, with almost no words on the young man's part; but the father blurted out several things—as that his daughter knew where he was going when he left the *Heathen Chinese*, and that he had an hour before seen Scrymgeour making love to another girl.

"Don't deny it!" cried the indignant father; "I recognised you by your velvet coat and broad hat."

Then Scrymgeour began to see more clearly. The girl had encouraged the deception, and had been allowed to meet her lover because he was supposed to be no adventurer, but the wealthy Mr. Scrymgeour. She must have told the fellow to get a coat and hat like his to help the plot. At the time the artist only saw all this in a jumble.

Scrymgeour had bravely resolved to explain everything now; but his bewilderment may be conceived when, on entering his saloon with the lady's father, the first thing they saw was the lady herself. The old gentleman gasped, and his daughter looked at Scrymgeour imploringly.

"Now," said the father fiercely, "explain!"

The lady's tears became her vastly. Hardly knowing what he did, Scrymgeour put his arm round her.

"Well, go on," I said, when at this point Scrymgeour stopped.

"There is no more to tell," he replied; "you see the girl allowed me to—well, protect her—and—the old gentleman thinks we are engaged."

"I don't wonder. What does the lady say?"

"She says that she ran along the bank and

got into my house-boat by the plank, meaning to see me before her father arrived, and to entreat me to run away."

"With her?"

"No, without her."

"But what does she say about explaining matters to her father?"

"She says she dare not, and as for me, I could not. That was why I telegraphed to you."

"You want me to be intercessor? No, Scrymgeour; your only honourable course is marriage."

"But you must help me. It is all your fault, teaching me to like the Arcadia Mixture."

I thought this so impudent of Scrymgeour that I bade him good-night at once. All the men on the stair are still confident that he would have married her had the lady not cut the knot by eloping with Scrymgeour's double.

J. M. BARRIE.

By permission of the Author.

THE DEATH OF COLUMBA.

SAXON stranger, thou didst wisely,
Sunder'd for a little space
From that motley stream of people
Drifting by this holy place;
With the furnace and the funnel
Through the long sea's glancing arm,
Let them hurry back to Oban,
Where the tourist loves to swarm.
Here, upon this lump of granite,
Sit with me a quiet while,
And I'll tell thee how Columba
Died upon this old grey isle.

I.

'Twas in May, a breezy morning,
When the sky was fresh and bright,
And the broad blue ocean shimmer'd
With a thousand gems of light.
On the green and grassy Machar,
Where the fields are spreaden wide,
And the crags in quaint confusion
Jut into the Western tide:
Here his troop of godly people,
In stout labour's garb array'd,
Blithe their fruitful task were plying
With the hoe and with the spade.
'I will go and bless my people,'
Quoth the father, "ere I die,
But the strength is slow to follow
Where the wish is swift to fly;
I am old and feeble, Diarmid,
Yoke the oxen, be not slow,
I will go and bless my people,
Ere from earth my spirit go."

On his ox-drawn wain he mounted,
Faithful Diarmid by his side;
Soon they reach'd the grassy Machar,
Soft and smooth, Iona's pride:
"I am come to bless my people,
Faithful fraters, ere I die;
I had wish'd to die at Easter,
But I would not mar your joy,
Now the Master plainly calls me,
Gladly I obey his call;
I am ripe, I feel the sickle,
Take my blessing, ere I fall."
But they heard his words with weeping,
And their tears fell on the dew,
And their eyes were dimmed with sorrow,
For they knew his words were true,
Then he stood up on the waggon,
And his prayerful hands he hove,
And he spake and bless'd the people
With the blessing of his love:
"God be with you, faithful fraters,
With you now, and evermore;
Keep you from the touch of evil,
On your souls his Spirit pour;
God be with you, fellow workmen,
And from loved Iona's shore
Keep the blighting breath of demons,
Keep the viper's venom'd store!"
Thus he spake, and turn'd the oxen
Townwards; sad they went, and slow,
And the people, fix'd in sorrow,
Stood, and saw the father go.

II.

List me further, Saxon stranger,
Note it nicely, by the causeway
On the left hand, where thou came
With the motley tourist people,
Stands a cross of figured fame.
Even now thine eye may see it,
Near the nunnery, slim and grey:—
From the waggon there Columba
Lighted on that tearful day,
And he sat beneath the shadow
Of that cross, upon a stone,
Brooding on his speedy passage
To the land where grief is none;
When, behold, the mare, the white one
That was wont the milk to bear
From the dairy to the choister,
Stood before him meekly there,
Stood, and softly came up to him,
And with move of gentlest grace
O'er the shoulder of Columba
Thrust her piteous-pleading face,
Look'd upon him as a friend looks
On a friend that goes away,
Sunder'd from the land that loves him
By wide seas of briny spray!

"Fie upon thee for thy manners!"
 Diarmid cried with lifted rod,
 "Wilt thou with untimely fondness
 • Vex the prayerful man of God?"
 "Not so, Diarmid," cried Columba;
 "Dost thou see the speechful eyne
 Of the fond and faithful creature
 Sorrow'd with the swelling brine?
 God hath taught the mute unreasoning
 What thou fail'st to understand,
 That this day I pass for ever
 From Iona's shelly strand.
 Have my blessing, gentle creature,
 God doth bless both man and beast;
 From hard yoke, when I shall leave thee,
 Be thy faithful neck released."
 Thus he spoke, and quickly rising
 With what feeble strength remain'd,
 Leaning on stout Diarmid's shoulder,
 A green hillock's top he gained.
 There, or here where we are sitting,
 Whence his eye might measure well
 Both the cloister and the chapel,
 And his pure and prayerful cell,—
 There he stood, and high uplifting
 Hands whence flowed a healing grace,
 Breathed his latest voice of blessing
 To protect the sacred place,—
 Spake such words as prophets utter
 When the veil of flesh is rent,
 And the present fades from vision,
 On the germinating future bent:
 "God thee bless, thou loved Iona,
 Though thou art a little spot,
 Though thy rocks are grey and treeless,
 Thine shalt be a boastful lot;
 Thou shalt be a sign for nations;
 Nurtured on thy sacred breast,
 Thou shalt send on holy mission
 Men to teach both East and West;
 Peers and potentates shall own thee,
 Monarchs of wide-sceptre'd sway
 Dying shall beseech the honour
 To be tomb'd beneath thy clay;
 God's dear saints shall love to name thee,
 And from many a storied land
 Men of clerkly fame shall pilgrim
 To Iona's little strand."

III.

Thus the old man spake his blessing;
 Then, where most he loved to dwell,
 Through the well-known porch he enter'd
 To his pure and prayerful cell;
 And then took the holy psalter—
 'Twas his wont when he would pray—
 Bound with three stout clasps of silver,
 From the casket where it lay:
 There he read with fixed devoutness,
 And with craft full fair and fine,

On the smooth and polish'd vellum
 Copied forth the sacred line
 Till he came to where the kingly
 Singer sings in faithful wood,
 How the younglings of the lion
 Oft may roam in vain for food.
 But who fear the Lord shall never
 Live and lack their proper good.*
 Here he stopped, and said, "My latest
 Now is written; what remains
 • I bequeath to faithful Beathan
 To complete with pious pains."
 Then he rose, and in the chapel
 Conned the pious vesper song
 Inly to himself, for feeble
 Now the voice that once was strong;
 Hence with silent step returning
 To his pure and prayerful cell,
 On the round smooth stone he laid him
 Which for pallet served him well.
 Here some while he lay; then rising,
 To a trusty brother said:
 "Brother, take my parting message,
 Be my last words wisely weigh'd.
 "'Tis an age of brawl and battle;
 Men who seek not God to please,
 With wild sweep of lawless passion
 Waste the land and scourge the seas.
 Not like them be ye; be loving,
 Peaceful, patient, truthful, bold.
 But in service of your Master
 Use no steel and seek no gold."
 Thus he spake; but now there sounded
 Through the night the holy bell
 That to Lord's Day matins gather'd
 Every monk from every cell.
 Eager at the sound, Columba
 In the way foresped the rest,
 And before the altar kneeling,
 Pray'd with hands on holy breast.
 Diarmid followed; but a marvel
 Flow'd upon his wondering eyne,—
 All the windows shone with glorious
 Light of angels in the shrine.
 Diarmid enter'd; all was darkness.
 "Father!" But no answer came.
 "Father! art thou here, Columba?"
 Nothing answer'd to the name.
 Soon the troupe of monks came hurrying,
 Each man with a wandering light,
 For great fear had come upon them,
 And a sense of strange affright.
 "Diarmid! Diarmid! is the father
 With thee? Art thou here alone?"
 And they turn'd their lights and found him
 On the pavement lying prone.
 And with gentle hands they raised him,
 And he mildly look'd around,
 And he raised his arm to bless them,
 But it dropped upon the ground;

* Psalm xxxiv. 10.

And his breathless body rested
 On the arms that held him dear,
 And his dead face looked upon them
 With a light serene and clear;
 And they said that holy angels
 Surely hover'd round his head,
 For alive no loveliest ever
 Look'd so lovely as this dead.
 Stranger, thou hast heard my story,
 Thank thee for thy patient ear;
 We are pleased to stir the sleeping
 Memory of old greatness here.
 I have used no gloss, no varnish,
 To make fair things fairer look;
 As the record stands, I give it,
 In the old monk's Latin book.
 Keep it in thy heart, and love it,
 Where a good thing loves to dwell;
 It may help thee in thy dying,
 If thou care to use it well.

PROFESSOR BLACKIE.

From "Lays of the Highlands and Islands."

A FALLEN STAR.

THE keeper of the bookstall at a railway-station once told me that those novels commanded the greatest sale which were fortunate enough to possess "a happy ending." "Novel buyers, sir," said he to me, "at my stall at any rate, are mostly young ladies: the gentlemen go in for satirical weeklies. The young ladies gather round, and thumb the pages of my books to see in what way the stories terminate, and the novel which marries off its hero and heroine on the last page sells amazingly. One morning last week a young party lost her train through getting very deep into one of those volumes laid out there—that stiff-board one, with the picture of the girl with the straw hat and yellow hair. The young party was going down to a situation in the north, and cried at my stall for quite an hour when she found that the train had crept out without her. You'll see some blisters on the cover, if you'll look, sir; they're her tears."

I took this lesson to heart at the time, and think it politic to mention here, as a sop to the fair readers of this Narrative, that my story has a "Happy Ending."

Austin Landon's love affair arose out of the very theatre at Chucksford about which I have spoken to you so often. Austin was our juvenile gentleman for a season, and (wonderful for the little Chucksford theatre) was really juvenile and a gentleman. He was a great, tall, dark fellow, and stood quite six feet high, stockings or no stockings. At his own request we called him Tiny, a corruption of his Christian name which he had gained at home.

Tiny Landon came to us from Oxford (Magdalen,

I think), with ugly stories sticking to him of his having been expelled from his college. The stories took various shapes—Debt and Dishonesty some said; and we—the Chucksford company, many of us honestly down at heel and buttonless—cut him dead for a week. But other reports said "kicking a proctor," and, in the end, we gladly accepted this version, and Landon became a high favourite amongst us. He had a good "swallow"—i.e., could study a dozen long parts in a week without turning a hair (grey)—was a great hand at cricket, and did wonders with a cranky boat on the narrow muddy little stream dignified in the Chucksford Guide by the name of the river Bottlewell.

Six weeks after the commencement of the season Landon of course fell in love. Miss Clarissa Rosinbloom, a young lady who had recently appeared in town with some success, came to us as a star, and was to play Rosalind on the opening night of her engagement.

"Who is my Orlando?" asked Miss Rosinbloom, in the morning, of Boother, the manager.

Boother was pacing the stage restlessly, endeavouring, with intervals of abuse levelled at the carpenters, to recover the lines of Jacques.

"Orlando," repeated Boother, absently, "Orlando—oh, Tiny Landon."

"Tiny Landon!" echoed Miss Rosinbloom, opening her pretty blue eyes to their fullest extent, "Tiny Landon—what a singular name!"

"I beg pardon?" said Landon, from the wings, overhearing his title, "am I called?"

"Er—um—Mr. Tiny Landon, I think!" said Miss Rosinbloom. Mr. Boother tells me you play Orlando to-night."

Landon threw his head back and laughed—such a laugh, short and fresh and buoyant; he may have levelled the proctor, but nobody who heard his laugh could think him a swindler.

"Tiny or Austin Landon," said he. "Tiny is the name my friends give me. Yes, Miss Rosinbloom, I am your Orlando for want of a better. You may not know that I am a novice—almost a novice at any rate—but awfully in earnest."

"I am sure of that, Mr. Landon. You will play Orlando capitally, I know."

"How kind of you to say so! We are all delighted that you have come down to us, Miss Rosinbloom; we do things rather roughly here"—Boother, who caught this remark, glared at Landon, and boxed the ears of the call-boy—"and a fortnight's acquaintance with some finished art will be a tonic for us. Have you had a pleasant journey down? Isn't this a quaint little town?" Et cetera—et cetera—et cetera.

Landon and the little star were most friendly during the rehearsal, and the remainder of the company regarded him with envy. For Clarissa Rosinbloom was undeniably charming and pretty. Naturally fair hair (naturally fair—how refreshing

it is to write and to think about it!) rolled up much against its will—for a pretty woman's hair, like a pretty woman, has a will of its own—and imprisoned under the dearest of little sealskin caps. Such a complexion, with heaps of genuine colour in it in the right places; and such teeth, not like a lot of raw recruits standing at ease, but as firm and as regular and even as two carefully selected files from the flower of the army! And possessing good features (nose the least bit inclined to turn up—well, some people have a fancy for the *retroussé*; I have, for instance) and a pair of fathomless blue eyes, and a clear complexion. Miss Rosinbloom was not afraid to smile; that is, she could afford, unlike many women, to let the muscles of her face have an occasional holiday. For it is the young lady with the weak points in her face who has to coax her expressions so that they revolve round the defects and never come near them to show them up. Clarissa Rosinbloom, under no such restraint, smiled and smiled again, and her smiles in their variety were graceful and quaint and frolicsome and everything in turns; a perfect display of facial fireworks, in fact—fireworks which at that time even her tears could not have dampened.

What a rehearsal it was! How Landon did stumble over the text to be sure! How earnest he was in the love scenes, but how innocent of Shakespeare! Ah, he was rehearsing something more real than a play! Poor Tiny! Poor Clarissa!

Miss Rosinbloom's fortnight at Chucksford passed quickly. On the last day, cold and bleak though it was, with an easterly breeze whistling the overture to a hard winter, Landon and she were alone in the cranky little boat on the Bottlewell.

"I don't know that I am prepared to be so enthusiastic about my profession to-day," remarked Landon, gloomily. "It's a poor business, which teases a fellow by giving him a friend for a fortnight and then snatching the friend away for ever."

"You will gain heaps of other friends in time, and grow to like variety," said Clarissa, from the depths of her furs. "Besides, if you care to, you can write to me occasionally—I mustn't answer your letters, of course—but you may write to me any number of times before the 16th of next November."

"What after the 16th of next November?"

"Oh, things will be different then. Don't you know that I am going to be—? I mean, you will have forgotten me."

"That's not it!" cried Landon, savagely. "I believe I can guess what you mean. Wait till I pull into that bank."

He bent forward, looking straight into her face, and with a couple of strokes sent the shivering little craft among the rushes. The "Mary Jane" seemed to have some loose teeth in her head, for

she went with a clatter and a rattle, and her ribs, too, creaked piteously.

"Now," said Landon, "tell me about the 16th of November." The tall rushes rose above them on every side, and shook the drops of autumn dew on to Miss Rosinbloom's pretty little head. Upon which, Miss Rosinbloom shivered a little, drew her furs closer to her neck, and puckered up her lips as a child does when it is about to cry.

"Take me out of this, Tin, dear—this rheumatically boat gives me the blues."

"I'll take you out of this when I've had a last talk with you. 'Rissa, I guess what you are going to tell me. You are engaged to be married."

"Yes, sir,"

"Who is the man?"

"The gentleman is Mr. Carfax, a leather merchant, of Wood Street, Cheapside."

"Do you like him?"

"How rude you are! of course I do."

"Love him?"

"He's so very bandy, and only five feet five."

Landon relapses into the abstraction of gloomy thoughtfulness, after ten minutes of which, Clarissa, who is weary of drumming a tattoo with her feet on the bottom of the boat, by way of reminder flings him her handkerchief—a pretty little piece of uselessness with a monogram in the corner. He takes it, looks at the initials, kisses them quietly, and then crams the morsel of cambric deep into his pocket. . . .

"I suppose," said Landon, deliberately, "it is too late to ask you if you could ever bring yourself to marry a poor fellow who has nothing but a steady determination and a few vague prospects for his fortune."

"Really, I have never been called upon to consider such a question, Mr. Landon—"

"'Rissa!"

"But it wouldn't answer, Austen—indeed it wouldn't. I come of a poor lot, and am the general money-bag of a mother and a couple of helpless sisters. I'm not mightily strong, physically or mentally, and I may break up at my work at any moment, and then there is not even bread and butter for us all. When I marry Mr. Carfax he is to pension my folks and to get me—me, with a weak head and a monster of a cough in the winter months—for his reward. You're wrong if you envy him, Austen, for I'm no good to any man; upon my word I'm not!"

So the tall rushes parted once more, and the cranky boat groaned its way out from their midst and left them to put their heads together again—to nod and rustle in conference on what they had overheard. Slowly and gloomily Landon pulled home, Miss Rosinbloom looking everywhere but in his face, and plucking nervously at the fur which enveloped her.

"So that's over," said Landon when the boat's

side jammed the landing-stage. "Rissa, I hope you'll be very happy all your life. Good-bye, little woman. God bless you."

He drew a deep breath and set his lips tightly together. Clarissa looked at him for an instant, and for once even the shadow of a smile faded and her eyes glistened. And there chancing to be nobody in sight, they, both being of the same mind, bent forward and kissed very seriously. They had known each other a whole, fortnight.

A kiss sometimes lasts a very long time, and this identical salute lingered still fresh on Austen's lips and in Austen's heart when a year had passed, and Miss Rosinbloom had been rich Mrs. Carfax for ten months. Miss Rosinbloom, having become rich Mrs. Carfax, had discarded her professional vocation and spent the greater portion of her time abroad, where the little gossiping papers were fond of chronicling her movements. And so it happened that the same newspaper which stated that the beautiful Mrs. Carfax, *née* Rosinbloom, was turning the heads of the Parisians also paragraphed a serious accident to a Mr. Austen Landon, a promising young English actor of the Chucksford Theatre.

A horrible jar of the system, a compound fracture of the right leg, a contused head, with a nice little side dish in the way of a broken rib or two, formed the *menu* of injuries of which that promising young actor, Mr. Austen Landon, partook with the utmost freedom. When thirteen stone and upwards of "promising" humanity tumble through a stage trap into a cellar below it becomes for the moment a matter of uncertainty as to how far the early promises of those thirteen stone and upwards may be realised. The ripening of Mr. Landon's prospects was certainly in abeyance for some time after his accident, and it became necessary (with the practical assistance of a forgiving family, which wept in large numbers at the injured man's bedside) for him to—leave England to pull himself—actually as well as metaphorically—together.

Thus it chanced that on one evening in the month of September, a little more than a year from the day Austen had first met pretty Clarissa, he found himself, with a cigarette between his teeth, lounging drearily at the railway station at Rouen awaiting a train to carry him to Paris. With an Englishman's customary oblivion of the fact that there are two sides to a railway station—an up and a down—Austen was kicking his heels on the wrong platform, and did not fail to abuse the railway officials in a language which, without being French, was certainly not English, when he discovered himself in the midst of a horde of passengers which had temporarily disgorged itself from a train proceeding to Dieppe. Hustled hither and thither by the excited crowd, his cigarette knocked from

his mouth and his toes trodden upon most unmercifully, Austen was gradually extricating himself from his dilemma when he encountered, crouched upon a mean wooden seat, a little figure, the sight of which brought him up short, with the blood to his face and his hat in his hand, in an instant.

"Clarissa!"

And rich Mrs. Carfax looked up into his face. Oh, rich Mrs. Carfax, what has become of the old sparkle of your eyes and the bloom which was upon your cheeks? And to what distant haven of things past and irrevocable have your variety of smiles drifted? Alas! the deep blue of your eyes has dulled itself into a sober grey, like a lake with a thunder-cloud upon it, and those evanescent smiles have trodden upon each other's heels in their hurry to make off and leave you sad and shivering on this bare wooden seat in the miserable little railway-station of Rouen! No sumptuous bouquet of summer flowers has ever issued from the feverish atmosphere of a dusty ballroom more faded and bloomless than you have come out from your few months of married life!

"Mr. Landon!"

"Good gracious! what are you doing here? How ill you look!"

"I am ill—I think I am dying."

"Dying!"

"Yes—of disgrace and shame."

"Rissa!"

"Go away from me—don't touch me! I'm not good enough for you, even to look at."

"Are you alone?"

"Alone! Yes—alone, for I've no friend to tell me how bad I am."

"Where is your husband?"

"I—I don't know."

A tall man, bronzed and grey, pushes Austen aside and takes Mrs. Carfax's arm. She submits quite helplessly, and Austen is left alone. In a moment, however, he has recovered from his daze and has followed and overtaken the couple. The tall man has his hand upon the handle of a carriage-door; Austen touches his sleeve.

"I beg your pardon," stammers Austen. "Are you Mr. Carfax?"

The tall man, without a word, assists Clarissa into the carriage and follows her. For a moment Clarissa's pale face appears at the window.

"Are you Mr. Carfax?" Austen repeats in a louder tone.

He sees that Clarissa's white lips form the word No, and then there is a shrill whistle and a hubbub and confusion, and he is forced away from the moving train to find himself left upon the platform with a handful of people and a few porters.

"Excuse me," says an Englishman, running up to him, "I see your luggage is labelled for Paris. Like me, you have made a mistake, and are on the wrong side of the station."

"No—I—I am not going to Paris."

"Oh, I beg your pardon."

"What is the destination of the train which has just started?"

"Dieppe, I believe."

"Thank you. I am going to Dieppe."

"Yes, sir," says the proprietor of the Hotel des Etrangers at Dieppe—English by nationality, Smithson by name—"there is a lady in this hotel o' mine who arrived here late last night."

"With a tall gentleman with a grey beard?"

"Yes, sir, she were."

"Is the lady within?"

"Yes, sir, she are. And what's more, she's likely to be, for she's ill a'bed, and Dr. Perignon is with her now. My daughter-in-law is a nussing of her, but the poor thing's lonely, and yet won't let us send for a friend!"

"Ill! Where is this lady's travelling companion?"

"Lor', sir, he crossed to Newhaven by the late boat last night. You see, sir, the young lady's cough set in very bad, and Perignon wouldn't allow her to travel farther, so the grey gentleman swore a little in the bar yonder, gave me fifty pounds in bank-notes for the use of the lady, left her his best love, and caught the boat in the nick of time."

"I must see the doctor—where is he?"

"He'll be down in a minute. Poor soul, I got my daughter-in-law to break the news that the gent had gone, for, not knowing exactly how the wind lay, I was fearsome for the effects of it on her. But, bless your soul, I do believe it stopped her coughing! For when Célestine told her the news she had a big cry, and then would insist on being held up in bed to say her prayers. I took the liberty of listening at the door, and I assure you, sir, I fancied I was back again by the side of my old dead and gone mother a-sitting in the church at Aylesford, where I come from, ay—thirty year ago or more!"

At sunset on the same day Célestine is knitting in the broad window recess of the capacious bed-chamber, and Austin is sitting by Clarissa's bedside holding her thin, white, almost pulseless, hand.

"Don't telegraph to any one till to-morrow," begs Clarissa, feebly.

"Why wait till to-morrow, little woman?"

"I'm too ill to reason; but do, do, wait. I'm so happy now. I know that it is all up with me, and they say that Death takes all the black spots out of one's soul. Besides, you are near me, old Tiny, and you are the best fellow I have ever known. Don't telegraph till to-morrow!"

"If you believed in me, why did you not come to me for help and counsel?"

"Because I was wicked, and I wanted to revenge myself upon my husband." She raises herself upon

her elbow and looks at Austen with something of the old light in her eyes. "Tiny, six months after my marriage he beat me, and told me that he knew I had sold myself to him. It was true—oh! it was too true, which made it all the more cruel for him to say such a thing to me. But how could I have done otherwise when Minnie and Bertha at home were clamouring for silk dresses and fineries? At last things got worse with me: I became delirious—mad, and I had only one idea in my head, to revenge myself upon him, and to humiliate him in the eyes of his friends and the world. The man you saw yesterday—his name is Brownlees, and he is a friend of Gregory Carfax's—took me out of Paris yesterday morning, and we were to go on board a yacht lying off the English coast. Thank God, I am not on board that yacht to-day!"

"Yes, thank God for that! You will get well and strong again, Rissa, and you must then set this dreadful business right."

"No; I have lived my life—I have drunk it down to the very dregs. Mother and Min and Bertha have their home and their silks and fineries, and that is all I have been reared for from childhood. They have been hard on me, but I am so sorry for them now, for who will care for them when I am gone?"

By-and-by, Dr. Perignon arrives to look at his patient. (Frequenters of Dieppe will remember white-haired old Perignon and his extraordinary English.) Perignon feels her pulse, chats a little, smiles comfortably, and departs, saying that Clarissa is doing extremely well; and at nine o'clock in the evening she—dies.

She dies with her head resting upon Austen's arm—Célestine is dozing by the broad window.

"I shall be with you early in the morning, Rissa dear."

"Of course. And, Tiny."

"Yes?"

"If the doctor's judgment should be wrong—if I should die—"

"Oh, don't, don't say that!"

"You won't think that I died anything but a penitent and happy girl, will you?"

"Don't talk like that—I can't bear it."

"You are by my side, and you are the best fellow I have ever known. So, if the worst comes"—laying her head upon his shoulder—"remember what I tell you: that my life, after all its sin and misery, ends happily, dear."

And he looks down and sees that it is over—all the good and all the evil, as if it had never been!

And Perignon declares at the funeral that this is the first instance in which his judgment has been at fault. But we all know what a humbug old Perignon is. Mrs. Rosinbloom (a buxom widow, engaged to be married to a gentleman in the English Customs) is at the funeral,

which takes place in Paris. Minnie and Bertha are there also, looking very tasteful in their mourning and very sorrowful. And Mr. Gregory Carfax is there with a troop of friends, and the undertaker considers the whole affair an enormous success. And when it is over Austen is left alone beside the grave, with all the bitterness of memory upon him, clasping to his heart the little morsel of cambric with the monogram in the corner.

The only intimate friend of Mr. Gregory Carfax's who was unavoidably prevented from being present was his old schoolfellow, Colonel Brownlee, enjoying at the time a little early shooting in Argyleshire.

ARTHUR W. PINERO.

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MARGUERITE.

MASSACHUSETTS BAY, 1760.

THE robins sang in the orchard, the buds into blossoms grew;
Little of human sorrow the buds and the robins knew!

Sick, in an alien household, the poor French neutral lay;
Into her lonesome garret fell the light of the April day—

Through the dusty window, curtained by the spider's warp and woof,
On the loose-laid floor of hemlock, on oaken ribs of roof.

The bedquilt's faded patchwork, the teacups on the stand,
The wheel with flaxen tangle, as it dropped from her sick hand!

What to her was the song of the robin, or warm morning light,
As she lay in the trance of the dying, heedless of sound or sight?

Done was the work of her hands, she had eaten her bitter bread;
The world of the alien people lay behind her dim and dead.

But her soul went back to its childhood; she saw the sun o'erflow
With gold the basin of Minas, and set over Gasperau,

The low, bare flats at ebbtide, the rush of the sea at flood,
Through inlet and creek and river, from dyke to upland wood;

The gulls in the red of morning, the fish-hawks rise and fall,

The drift of the fog in moonshine, over the dark coast-wall.

She saw the face of her mother, she heard the song she sang;
And far off, faintly, slowly, the bell for vespers rang!

By her bed the hardfaced mistress sat, smoothing the wrinkled sheet,
Peering into the face so helpless, and feeling the ice-cold feet;

With a vague remorse atoning for her greed and long abuse,
By care no longer heeded and pity too late for use.

Up the stairs of the garret softly the son of the mistress stepped,
Leaned over the headboard, covering his face with his hands, and wept.

Outspoke the mother, who watched him sharply, with brow a-frown;
"What! love you the Papist, the beggar, the charge of the town?"

"Be she Papist or beggar who lies here, I know and God knows
I love her, and fain would go with her wherever she goes!

"O mother! that sweet face came pleading, for love so athirst!
You saw but the town-charge; I knew her God's angel at first."

Shaking her grey head, the mistress hushed down a bitter cry;
And awed by the silence and shadow of death drawing nigh,

She murmured a psalm of the Bible; but closer the young girl pressed,
With the last of her life in her fingers, the cross to her breast.

"My son, come away," cried the mother, her voice cruel grown;
"She is joined to her idols, like Ephraim; let her alone!"

But he knelt with his hand on her forehead, his lips to her ear,
And he called back the soul that was passing: "Marguerite, do you hear?"

She paused on the threshold of heaven; love, pity, surprise,
Wistful, tender, lit up for an instant the cloud of her eyes.

With his heart on his lips he kissed her, but never her cheek grew red,
And the words the living long for, he spake in the ear of the dead.

And the robins sang in the orchard, where buds to blossoms grew;
Of the folded hands and the still face never the robins knew!

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

THE ANGELS OF BUENA VISTA.

SPEAK and tell us, our Ximena, looking northward
 far away,

O'er the camp of the invaders, o'er the Mexican
 array,

Who is losing? who is winning? are they far or
 come they near?

Look abroad and tell us, sister, whither rolls the
 storm we hear?

"Down the hills of Angostura still the storm of
 battle rolls;

Blood is flowing, men are dying; God have mercy
 on their souls!"

Who is losing? who is winning?—"Over hill and
 over plain,

I see but smoke of cannon clouding through the
 mountain rain."

Holy Mother! keep our brothers! Look, Ximena,
 look once more.

"Still I see the fearful whirlwind rolling darkly as
 before,

Bearing on in strange confusion, friend and foe-
 man, foot and horse,

Like some wild and troubled torrent sweeping
 down its mountain course."

Look forth once more, Ximena! "Ah, the smoke
 has rolled away;

And I see the Northern rifles gleaming down the
 ranks of grey.

Hark! that sudden blast of bugles! there the
 troop of Minon wheels;

There the Northern horses thunder, with the
 cannon at their heels.

"Jesu, pity! how it thickens! now retreat and now
 advance!

Right against the blazing cannon shivers Puebla's
 charging lance!

Down they go, the brave young riders; horse and
 foot together fall;

Like a ploughshare in the fallow, through them
 ploughs the Northern ball."

Nearer came the storm and nearer, rolling fast
 and frightful on;

Speak, Ximena, speak and tell us, who has lost
 and who has won?

"Alas! alas! I know not; friend and foe together
 fall,

O'er the dying rush the living: pray, my sisters
 for them all!

"Lo! the wind the smoke is lifting: Blessed
 Mother, save my brain!

I can see the wounded crawling slowly out from
 heaps of slain.

Now they stagger, blind and bleeding; now they
 fall and strive to rise;

Hasten, sisters, haste and save them, lest they die
 before our eyes!

"O! my heart's love! O my dear one! lay thy poor
 head on my knee:

Dost thou know the lips that kiss thee? Canst
 thou hear me? Canst thou see?

O my husband, brave and gentle! O my Bernal,
 look once more

On the blessed cross before thee! Mercy! mercy!
 all is o'er!"

Dry, thy tears, my poor Ximena; lay thy dear
 one down to rest;

Let his hands be meekly folded, lay the cross upon
 his breast;

Let his dirge be sung hereafter, and his funeral
 masses said;

To-day, thou poor bereaved one, the living ask thy
 aid.

Close beside her, faintly moaning, fair and young,
 a soldier lay,

Torn with shot and pierced with lances, bleeding
 slow his life away;

But, as tenderly before him, the lorn Ximena
 knelt,

She saw the Northern eagle snning on his pistol-
 belt.

With a stifled cry of horror straight she turned
 away her head;

With a sad and bitter feeling looked she back upon
 her dead;

But she heard the youth's low moaning, and his
 struggling breath of pain,

And she raised the cooling water to his parching
 lips again.

Whispered low the dying soldier, pressed her hand
 and faintly smiled:

Was that pitying face his mother's? did she watch
 beside her child?

All his stranger words with meaning her woman's
 heart supplied;

With her kiss upon his forehead, "Mother!"
 murmured he, and died!

"A bitter curse upon them, poor boy, who led
 thee forth

From some gentle, sad-eyed mother, weeping,
 lonely, in the North!"

Spoke the mournful Mexic woman, as she laid him
 with her dead,

And turned to soothe the living, and bind the
 wounds which bled.

Look forth once more, Ximena! "Like a cloud
 before the wind

Rolls the battle down the mountains, leaving
 blood and death behind;

Ah! they plead in vain for mercy; in the dust the
 wounded strive;

Hide your faces, holy angels! oh thou Christ of
 God, forgive!"

Sink, O Night, among thy mountains! let the
cool, grey shadows fall;
Dying brothers, fighting demons, drop thy curtain
over all!
Through the thickening winter twilight, wide
apart the battle rolled,
In its sheath the sabre rested, and the cannon's
lips grew cold.
But the noble Mexic women still their holy task
pursued,
Through that long, dark night of sorrow, worn
and faint, and lacking food,
Over weak and suffering brother, with a tender
care they hung,
And the dying foeman blessed them in a strange
and Northern tongue.
Not wholly lost, O Father! is this evil world of
ours;
Upward, through its blood and ashes, spring afresh
the Eden flowers;
From its smoking hell of battle, Love and Pity
send their prayer,
And still thy white-winged angels hover dimly in
our air.

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

"EXEUNT OMNES."

BUSINESS was decidedly bad at Dirgeville.

"It'll mean bankruptcy," said Manager Kidgett to his leading man, McGowrie, "if there's another week of it."

"I don't know. It wasn't such a bad house on Saturday," said McGowrie. "There was, at least, a score in the pit."

"Yes," groaned the Manager, "half of 'em paper."

"Well, one of the private boxes was taken, at any rate. That's a good sign."

"Nothing of the kind. It was my landlady and her family, in lieu of a fortnight's rent," said Kidgett. "I tell you business has gone to the dogs, and nothing but a startling novelty will save us. Shakespeare won't fill the house, and that's a fact. The matchless creations of the poet's fancy fetcheth them not. They require something that appeals to the morbid taste—the morbid taste, sir," repeated Mr. Kidgett impressively; "and that something I propose to give them on Saturday next."

"You do? What's the idea?"

Mr. Kidgett, with much complacency of manner, produced from the inner pocket of his coat a flaming poster, which he handed, with an air of great personal satisfaction, to his leading man, who eagerly perused it. Mr. Kidgett meanwhile furtively watching its effect upon his subordinate with much secret exultation.

The document, which was printed in many colours, set forth that on the Saturday evening next ensuing there would be presented, in addition to the usual powerful attractions, "an unprecedented novelty," for that night only, in the shape of "Hamed-el Said, the Nubian Lion-tamer," who, it was announced, would enter "the lion's den" and perform certain daring feats, specified at length on the poster "as performed by him before all the crowned heads," &c. It was specially notified at the foot of the bill that there would be "no advance in the prices"; but the exceptional importance of the entertainment was judiciously recognised by the further announcement, "Free list entirely suspended."

"That ought to bring 'em—eh?" said Kidgett interrogatively when Mr McGowrie had completed the perusal of the imposing announcement summarised above.

"Not only *ought* but *will*," said McGowrie. "But, no offence, of course—but—I mean to say—it isn't a 'do,' is it?"

The countenance of Mr. Kidgett, hitherto managerially profound, relaxed, and the faintest semblance of a wink hovered for a brief space o'er his dexter optic. Beyond this, however, he deemed it inexpedient to enlighten Mr. McGowrie upon the subject, and the matter dropped.

Next day the walls and boardings of Dirgeville were liberally decorated with Mr. Kidgett's flaming announcements, and caused an immense sensation. Small knots of the townspeople gathered round them, and the "unprecedented novelty" promised for the ensuing Saturday became a general topic of conversation. This the astute manager, in his walks abroad, was not slow to observe, and he rejoiced accordingly.

Saturday night arrived in due course, and fully an hour before the advertised time of opening, the doors of the theatre were besieged by an eager crowd anxious to obtain good seats, and within twenty minutes after the doors were opened, scarcely a square inch of seating accommodation was vacant.

"Splendid!" murmured Mr. Kidgett, as he surveyed the crowded house through a convenient slit in the curtain, "Capital! The finest house I've ever had!" and he went round to the pay-boxes for the purpose of obtaining a rough computation as to what amount had been taken at the doors.

The performances commenced with a highly-spiced melodrama, entitled, *The Avenger; or, the Terror of the West*, which was received with much favour, the audience, in expectation of the coming treat, being unusually good-humoured.

The scene of this drama, in which Mr. McGowrie came out very strong, was laid in the American backwoods, and it appeared that, previous to the commencement of the action, a certain Renegade Rube had in a playful moment brutally murdered

a respectable old couple bearing the honoured patronymic of Smith. He had likewise abducted their only daughter Ruth, set fire to their homestead, and otherwise rendered himself objectionable, for no apparent reason other than his naturally playful disposition, and the enmity he bore to Dave Smith, the son of the murdered couple.

On the curtain rising, this latter individually (powerfully impersonated by Mr. McGowrie) is seen returning to the homestead after a day's hunting, only to find it in ruins, his parents murdered, and his sister gone. In a spirited speech he announces his determination never to rest until he has recovered his sister, and slain the destroyer of his happy home. Later on, having assumed a disguise, he becomes a member of Renegade Rube's gang, in company with a comic comrade, who supplies the necessary low-comedy element. Next we find Dave Smith and the C. C. inciting the other members of the gang to throw off their allegiance to Rube, in which object they succeed. The C. C. then perceives Doeskin Dick, Rube's lieutenant, approaching with Ruth, upon which they all conceal themselves behind convenient trees, which is no sooner accomplished than Dick and Ruth come upon the scene.

It is at once apparent that Dick's company is exceedingly distasteful to Ruth, the more especially as he pesters her with offers of marriage. She indignantly requests him to leave her, at which he loudly declares that she must and shall be his, and scornfully asks who can prevent him accomplishing his design. "I can!" thunders Dave, as he emerges from his place of concealment and shoots the ruffian dead, amidst the deafening plaudits of the audience. At the same moment the C. C. and the mutinous members of Rube's gang also come forth from their hiding-places, whilst Rube himself rushes on L. V. E. and is about to shoot Dave from behind, when the C. C. grasps the Renegade's arm, and the pistol explodes harmlessly in the air.

This was an effective and exciting "picture," and the audience were on the tiptoe of expectation as to what was to happen next, when suddenly a most remarkable and unexpected incident took place.

Without the faintest apparent show of reason, the whole of the *dramatis personee* then upon the stage made a most rapid and mysterious exeunt at the right-hand wings. In such haste were they to get off, that the lady who impersonated Ruth (a promising young actress of forty-five) displayed unexpected celerity of motion. Her movements, usually characterised by extreme slowness and deliberation, were upon this occasion remarkably brisk and lively, and she was one of the first to disappear from the scene. But the others were almost equally as expeditious, and Dave, Rube, and the Comic Comrade, in their inexplicable eagerness to get off first, became involved in a sort of snake-puzzle, and made a complicated and some-

what undignified disappearance in one confused heap. Even the defunct Dick proved no exception to the general rule. Indeed, for once in a moribund condition, he exhibited unparalleled agility, and was off as speedily as the swiftest of his living colleagues. Altogether it was as rapid and complete an exodus as imagination could well conceive, and in a few seconds the stage "stood tenantless," and the boards were bare.

The audience had witnessed this remarkable occurrence with silent wonder, and were still in a state of noiseless surprise when a new and most unwelcome actor came upon the stage.

This, then, accounted for that sudden stampede, for, despite a certain awkwardness of gait, scragginess of body, dinginess of hide, and lumpiness of tail, there was no mistaking that majestic visage and that flowing mane.

The lion had escaped!

There was no doubt about that. Leo it unquestionably was. In very poor condition, 'twas true, but there he was, and the audience couldn't blink the fact.

Something very like a panic would undoubtedly have ensued, had not the fears of the spectators been in some degree alleviated by the appearance of the lion-tamer, who, with a commanding gesture, intimated that there was no cause for alarm whilst he was there.

Somewhat reassured, the audience watched, with breathless interest, what next was to occur.

The lion-tamer, who, despite his dusky skin, bore a strong family resemblance to Mr. Kidgert, dealt Leo two or three sharp blows on the hind quarters with a leathern thong, but with no appreciable result. The lion, who appeared to be of a contemplative and philosophical turn of mind, stood calmly in the centre of the stage, surveying the audience with a sort of pitying curiosity, as if they were an interesting zoological collection, many degrees lower in the animal scale than himself, assembled there for his special gratification. And the more the lion-tamer applied the thong, still more did the lion become absorbed in his scrutiny.

Getting annoyed at the provoking insensibility of Leo, the tamer had recourse to a more vigorous method of procedure, and, producing an iron goad, prodded the majestic beast in various tender points, with so much energy and determination that he at length succeeded in arousing Leo from his lethargy.

Then the lion, much put out, opened his ponderous jaws, evidently with the intention of emitting a savage roar, and the audience trembled in anticipation of the dreadful sound.

"Hee-haw! Hee-haw!"

Blank amazement and wondering incredulity formed the predominant expression on every visage.

"He-e-e-haw! He-haw!"

That settled it. The lion had written himself down an ass, and Mr. Kidgett's ingenious little device was exploded. The asinine nature had asserted itself, despite the leonine garb in which the animal was clothed.

Matters were smoothed over somehow, but the lion-taming exhibition was *not* announced for repetition upon a future occasion, and when Mr. Kidgett next produced "The Avenger," the remarkable exeunt noticed upon that memorable occasion was not introduced in the performance.

A. R. MARSHALL.

THE CAVALIER'S ESCAPE.

TRAMP! trample! went the roan,
Trap! trap! went the grey;
But pad! pad! like a thing that was mad
My chestnut broke away.
'Twas just five miles from Salisbury town,
And but one hour to day.

Thud! thud! came on the heavy roan,
Rap! rap! the mettled grey;
But my chestnut mare was of blood so rare,
That she showed them all the way.
Spur on! spur on!—I doffed my hat
And wished them all good day.

They splashed through miry rut and pool,
Spintered through fence and rail.
But chestnut Kate switched over the gate—
I saw them droop and tail.
To Salisbury town but a mile of down,
Once over this brook and rail.

Trap! trap! I heard their echoing hoofs,
Past the walls of mossy stone;
The roan flew on at a staggering pace,
But blood is better than bone.
I patted old Kate and gave her the spur,
For I knew it was all my own.

But trample! trample! came their steeds,
And I saw their wolf's eyes turn;
I felt like a royal hart at bay,
And made me ready to turn.
I looked where highest grew the may,
And deepest arched the fern.

I flew at the first knave's sallow throat;
One blow, and he was down,
The second rogue fired twice and missed;
I sliced the villain's crown,
Clove through the rest, and flogged brave Kate,
Fast, fast to Salisbury town!

Pad! pad! they came on the level sward,
Thud! thud! upon the sand;
With a gleam of swords, and a burning match,

And a shaking of flag and hand:
But one long bound and I passed the gate,
Safe from the canting band.

WALTER THORNBURN.

THE ROCK-A-BY LADY.

FOR CHILDREN—TO BE INTONED TO A LULLABY RHYTHM.

The rock-a-by lady from Hushaby-street
Comes stealing, comes creeping.
The poppies they hang from her head to her feet,
And each has a dream that is tiny and fleet.
She bringeth her poppies to you, my sweet,
When she findeth you sleeping.

There is one little dream of a beautiful drum;
Rub-a-dub it goes.
There is one little dream of a big sugar plum,
And lo! thick and fast the other dreams come
Of pop guns that bang and tin tops that hum,
And a trumpet that bloweth.

And dollies peep out of those wee little dreams
With laughter and singing;
And boats go a-floating on silvery streams,
And the stars peek-a-boo with their own misty
gleams,
And up, up and up, where the mother moon
beams,
The fairies go winging.

Would you dream all these dreams that are tiny
and fleet?
They'll come to you sleeping;
So shut the two eyes that are weary, my sweet,
For the rock-a-by lady from Hushaby-street,
With poppies that hang from her head to her feet,
Comes stealing, comes creeping.

EUGENE FIELD.

MRS. MINCHIN.

Mrs. MINCHIN cannot be called a good sailor, for she is not happy at sea when there is the least bit of a "lop"—otherwise termed a "chop". or a "bobbie." Yet I am certain she would stand the motion better did she not invariably undergo a course of vain preventive measures, supposed to obviate the dread malady, the moment she sets foot on the steamer.

Firstly, she selects the stuffiest couch in the stuffiest corner of the stuffiest saloon she can find, and stretches herself full length thereon, covering herself with rugs and shawls. Then she takes two or three "anti-nausea" lozenges, flabby, gelatinous masses, like half-done glue, and calculated to turn up Neptune himself in ten minutes, and perhaps,

also, has a sip of weak brandy and water, or sucks an orange as an additional preventive. The next step is to call for one of those utensils specially associated with the steward and rough weather, which she places in an aggressively conspicuous position, after which she closes her eyes and awaits the inevitable.

Of course she is always ill. On one occasion the steamer was delayed for half-an-hour at the wharf, and Mrs. Minchin, thinking that by this time we must be miles out at sea, suffered dreadfully. Going below to look after her, I found her in the limp stage.

"Oh, Aisy!" she gasped, "is there any danger?"

"What do you mean?" I said, "we haven't unmoored yet."

"Nonsense!" she moaned. "I can hear the waves dashing over the deck."

A light dawned upon me. The hands were washing down the decks before starting, and she had been deceived by the splashing!

When we left Tangier, shortly after my pig-sticking experiences, we took the overland route from Cadiz, as Mrs. Minchin could not be persuaded to face the horrors of the terrible Bay of Biscay. In fact, she wanted to come the whole way by land, but I told her it would cost too much to fill up the Straits of Gibraltar and the English Channel, so she reluctantly gave way. I never could understand why Mrs. Minchin's notions of geography should be so vague.

Arrived at Boulogne, we found to our dismay that the "bounding main" was bounding even more than usual, and that the "rolling deep" was rolling in a manner that precluded the advisability of making one's home on it with the smallest amount of comfort. However, we were in for it, and dismally progressed up the steamer's gangway with the other unfortunate passengers, like the animals going into the ark.

Mrs. Minchin, showing the first "anti-nausea" lozenge into her mouth, made a dive for the saloon, where, as she observed, she could not see the waves. For my part, I would rather see the waves than four Frenchmen, seventeen women and three babies, all ill at once, but tastes differ.

I was enveloping Mrs. Minchin in her rugs, and preparing her as well as I could for the approaching sacrifice, in a strange little foreigner, with piercing black eyes, long hair and a sallow complexion, came down the companion and addressed the occupants of the saloon from the last step.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I am ze celebrate Professor Olaf Zlavinsky, of Prague—professor of Mesmerism or Magnetic Hypnotism. I am now going to England to give my wonderful *stance* in ze chief public halls of ze kingdom, under ze most distinguished patronage, and I offer you my services to banish ze horrors of ze *mal de mer*. I need not tell you zat when a subject is under ze influence of hypnotic magnetism, ze subject is

quite unconscious of outward things, and is in *rapport* only with ze mesmerist. When in ze hypnotic trance he will believe all zat ze mesmerist tells him, and will experience any sensation zat is in ze mesmerist's mind.

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, to-day ze sea is ver rough, and I see you are not all good sailors, for some of you are already turning green. For ze small sum of five francs each (here two French men and four women hastily left the saloon) I will put you all into ze state of hypnotic trance, and not wake you up again until ze boat arrives at Folkestone. You cannot feel ze terrible *mal de mer*, for I will tell you you are all in bed at home, or in a beautiful garden in ze tropics sleeping upon a bed of geraniums, or give you some other pleasing illusions. No matter how much ze boat jump, you will be happy—so happy—you shall feel like I feel and think what I think. Now, ladies and gentlemen, I will begin before ze boat starts. Zose zat are willing to submit to zis charming experiment please come forward. My charge is five francs only."

After some deliberation and hanging back, the two remaining Frenchmen and ten of the females, one of whom insisted that the two eldest babies should be hypnotised at a reduced charge, responded to the appeal, and were each given a disc of lead to gaze fixedly at as a preliminary step.

"Algernon," exclaimed Mrs. Minchin, "I am beginning to feel a little queer. Do give the man five francs for me and ask him to put me to sleep too."

I handed over the money, which had to be paid in advance, and sat down to see the result.

Mrs. Minchin and the others all sat in silence round the cabin, earnestly staring at their discs of lead as if they had been "struck so." By-and-by they seemed to be getting sleepy, and the professor walked from one to another, making a few passes before each face. All was going splendidly, and they would have been off in another minute, when there was a splutter and a scream, and one of the women shrieked out:

"Loramussey! If my precious baby ain't gone and swallowed his piece of lead!"

The spell was broken. They all woke up at once and patted and punched that baby and banged it on the back until the disc of lead flew out of its mouth and hit the mesmerist in the eye. Then the indignant mother demanded her money back, and made a fearful row when it was refused, leaving the cabin, with her injured offspring and the other baby, to appeal to the captain. The vessel in the meantime had started, and began to tumble about a bit, and it was some time before order was obtained and the experiment resumed. The second attempt was more successful, for all the subjects were finally sent to sleep, and the professor began to talk to them for the benefit of the incredulous who had refused to be operated upon.

"Where are you?" he inquired of Mrs. Minchin.

"Resting upon a heap of new-mown hay," she replied; "how sweet it smells!"

A fat old lady was asked whether she was not reclining in a gossamer hammock, and declared promptly that such was the case, although she must have weighed at least fifteen stone. All the subjects said they were happy and well, and that they did not feel the least sick, although it was blowing half a gale. It was a wonderful experiment.

We were about half-way across the Channel when the professor began to show symptoms of uneasiness. He no longer smiled, and his face assumed a yellowish hue.

The faces of the twelve subjects lost their smile of beatitude at the same time, and the roses left their cheeks.

The ship was now pitching and lurching enough to loosen the stoppings in one's teeth. Perhaps something had disagreed with the professor, or maybe he could not stand more than half an hour of that kind of motion. Anyhow, beads of perspiration stood upon his brow.

The twelve subjects perspired freely.

The mesmerist's countenance became greener and greener.

The subjects assumed a verdant aspect. They were too much in *rapport*.

"Steward!" gasped the professor.

"Steward!" echoed the twelve subjects.

* * * * *

The reader may guess what followed. Mrs. Minchin declares she has never been so ill in her life, and there is no prospect of her ever consenting to be hypnotised again.

By kind permission of the Proprietors of "Tick-me up."

— — —
"NO!"

Would ye learn the bravest thing

That man can ever do?

Would ye be an uncrowned king;

Absolute and true?

Would ye seek to emulate

All we learn in story,

Of the noble, just, and great;

Rich in real glory?

Would ye lose much bitter care

In your lot below?

Bravely speak out when and where

'Tis right to utter "No."

Learn to speak this little word

In its proper place—

Let no timid doubt be heard,

Clothed with sceptic grace;

Let thy lips, without disguise,

Boldly pour it out;

Though a thousand dulcet lies

Keep hovering about.

For be sure our lives would lose

Future years of woe;

If our courage could refuse

The present hour with "No."

When Temptation's form would lead

To some pleasant wrong—

When she tunes her hollow reed

To the siren's song—

When she offers bribe, and smile,

And our conscience feels

There is nought but shining guile

In the gifts she deals;

Then, oh! then, let courage rise

To its strongest flow;

Show that ye are brave as wise,

And firmly answer "No."

Hearts that are too often given,

Like street merchandise—

Hearts that like bought slaves are driven

In fair freedom's guise;

Ye that poison soul and mind

With perjury's foul stains;

Ye who let the cold world bind,

In joyless marriage chains;

Be ye true unto yourselves;

Let rank and fortune go;

If Love light not the altar spot,

Let Feeling answer "No."

Men with goodly spirits blest,

Willing to do right;

Yet who stand with wavering breast

Beneath Persuasion's might;

When companions seek to taunt

Judgment into sin;

When the loud laugh fain would daunt

Your better voice within;

Oh! be sure ye'll never meet

More insidious foe;

But strike the coward to your feet,

By Reason's watchword, "No."

Ah, how many thorns we wreath,

To twine our brows around;

By not knowing when to breathe

This important sound!

Many a breast has rued the day

When it reckoned less

Of fruits upon the moral "Nay"

Than flowers upon the "Yes."

Many a sad, repentant thought

Turns to "long ago;"

When a luckless fate was wrought

By want of saying "No."

Few have learnt to speak this word
 When it *should* be spoken;
 Resolution is deferred,
 Vows to virtue broken.
 More of courage is required,
 This one word to say,
 Than to stand where shots are fired
 In the battle fray.
 Use it fitly, and ye'll see
 Many a lot below
 May be schooled, and nobly ruled
 By power to utter "No."

ELIZA COOK.

CAPTAIN PATON.

TOUCH once more a sober measure, and let punch
 and tears be shed,
 For a prince of good old fellows that alack-a-day is
 dead,
 A prince of worthy fellows, and a pretty man also,
 That has left the Salt-market in sorrow, grief, and
 wo;
 Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
 mo!

His waistcoat, coat, and breeches, were all cut off
 the same web,
 Of a beautiful snuff-colour, or a modest gen'y
 drab,
 The blue stripe in his stocking round his neat slim
 leg did go,
 And his ruffles, of the cambric fine, were whiter
 than the snow;
 Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
 mo!

His hair was curled in order at the rising of the
 sun,
 In comely rows and buckles smart that round his
 ears did run,
 In front there was a toupee, that some inches up
 did grow,
 And behind there was a long queue that did o'er
 his shoulders flow;
 Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
 mo!

And whenever we foregathered he took off his wee
 three cockit,
 And he proffered you his snuff box, which he drew
 from his side-pocket,
 And on Burdett or Bonaparte he'd make a remark
 or so,
 And then along the plainstones like a provost he
 would go;
 Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
 mo!

In dirty days he pick'd well his footsteps with his
 rattan,
 Oh! you ne'er could see the smallest speck on the
 shoes of Captain Paton;
 And on entering the coffee-room at *two*, all men
 would know,
 They would see him with his Courier in the middle
 of the row;
 Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
 mo!

Now and then upon a Sunday he invited me to
 dine
 On a herring and a mutton chop, which his maid
 dressed very fine,
 There was also a little Malmsey, and a bottle of
 Bourdeaux,
 Which between me and the Captain passed nimbly
 to and fro;
 Oh, I ne'er shall take pot-luck with Captain Paton
 no mo!

Or, if a bowl was mentioned, the Captain he would
 ring,
 And bid Nelly to the West Port run, and a stoup of
 water bring;
 Then he would mix the genuine stuff, as they made
 it long ago,
 With limes, that on his property in Trinidad did
 grow;
 Oh, we ne'er shall taste the like of Captain Paton's
 punch no mo!

Then all the time he would discourse so sensible and
 courteous,
 Perhaps talking of last sermon he heard from Dr.
 Porteous,
 Or some little bit of scandal about Mrs. So-and-so,
 Which he scarce could credit, having heard the *con*
 but not the *pro*;
 Oh, we ne'er shall hear the like of Captain Paton
 no mo!

And when the candles were brought forth, and the
 night was fairly setting in,
 He would tell some fine old stories, about Minden
 field or Dettingen,
 How he fought with a French major, and dispatched
 him at a blow,
 While the blood ran out like water on the soft grass
 below;
 Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
 mo!

But at length the Captain sickened, and grew worse
 from day to day,
 And all missed him in the coffee-room, from which
 now he stayed away,
 On Sabbaths too the wee kirk made a melancholy
 show,
 All for wanting of the presence of our venerable
 beau;
 Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
 mo!

And in spite of all that Cleghorn and Corkindale
could do,
'Twas plain, from twenty symptoms, that death was
in his view,
So the Captain made his testament, and submitted
to his foe,
And we laid him by the Ram's-horn kirk—'tis the
way we all must go;
Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
mo!

Touch once more a sober measure, and let punch
and tears be shed,
For a prince of good old fellows, that alack-a-day is
dead,
A prince of worthy fellows, and a pretty man also,
That has left the Salt-market in sorrow, grief, and
wo;
Oh, we ne'er shall see the like of Captain Paton no
mo!

JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART.

THE KNIFE-GRINDER.

A DIALOGUE IN SAPPHICS.

FRIEND OF HUMANITY.

NEEDY Knife-grinder! whither are you going?
Rough is the road—your wheel is out of order—
Bleak blows the blast; your hat has got a hole
in't,

So have your breeches!

Weary Knife-grinder! little think the proud
ones,

Who in their coaches roll along the turpikeroad,
what hard work 'tis crying all day "Knives
and

Scissors to grind O!"

Tell me, Knife-grinder, how you came to grind
knives?

Did some rich man tyrannically use you?
Was it the squire? or parson of the parish?
Or the attorney?

Was it the squire? for killing of his game? or
Covetous parson, for his tithes distraining?
Or roguish lawyer, made you lose your little
All in a lawsuit?

(Have you not read the "Rights of Man," by Tom
Paine?)

Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
Ready to fall, as soon as you have told your
Pitiful story.

KNIFE-GRINDER.

Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir,
Only last night, a-drinking at the Chequers,
This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
Torn in a scuffle.

Constables came up for to take me into
Custody; they took me before the justice;
Justice Oldmixon put me in the parish-
Stocks for a vagrant.

"I should be glad to drink your Honour's health in
A pot of beer, if you will give me sixpence;
But for my part, I never love to meddle
With politics, sir.

FRIEND OF HUMANITY.

I give thee sixpence! I will see thee damned
first—

Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to
vengeance—

Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
Spiritless outcast!

[Kicks the KNIFE-GRINDER, overturns his
wheel, and exit in a transport of Republican
enthusiasm and universal philanthropy.

GEORGE CANNING.

THE DIVER.

A BALLAD.

"Or, where is the knight or the squire so bold,
As to dive to the howling Charybdis below?—
I cast in the whirlpool a goblet of gold,
And o'er it already the dark waters flow;
Whoever to me may the goblet bring,
Shall have for his guerdon that gift of his king."

He spoke, and the cup from the terrible steep,
That, rugged and hoary, hung over the verge
Of the endless and measureless world of the deep,
Swirled into the maelstrom that maddened the
surge,

"And where is the diver so stout to go—
I ask ye again—to the deep below?"

And the knights and the squires that gathered
around,

Stood silent—and fixed on the ocean their eyes;
They looked on the dismal and savage Profound,
And the peril chilled back every thought of the
prize.

And thrice spoke the monarch—"The cup to
win,
Is there never a wight who will venture in?"

And all as before heard in silence the king—
Till a youth with an aspect unfearing but
gentle,

'Mid the tremulous squires—stept out from the
ring,

Umbuckling his girdle, and doffing his mantle;
And the murmuring crowd as they parted
asunder,

On the stately boy cast their looks of wonder.

As he strode to the marge of the summit, and gave
One glance on the gulf of that merciless main;
Lo! the wave that for ever devours the wave,
Casts roaringly up the Charybdis again;
And, as with the swell of the far thunder-boom,
Rushes foamingly forth from the heart of the
gloom.

And it bubbles and seethes, and it hisses and roars,
As when fire is with water commixed and
contending,

And the spray of its wrath to the welkin upsoars,
And flood upon flood hurries on, never ending.
And it never *will* rest, nor from travail be free,
Like a sea that is labouring the birth of a sea.

Yet, at length, comes a lull o'er the mighty com-
motion,

As the whirlpool sucks into black smoothness the
swell

Of the white-foaming breakers—and cleaves
through the ocean

A path that seems winding in darkness to hell.
Round and round whirled the waves—deep and
deeper still driven,

Like a gorge through the mountainous main
thunder-riven!

The youth gave his trust to his Maker! Before
That path through the riven abyss closed again—
Hark! a shriek from the crowd rang aloft from
the shore,

And, behold! he is whirled in the grasp of the
main!

And o'er him the breakers mysteriously rolled,
And the giant-mouth closed on the swimmer so
bold.

O'er the surface grim silence lay dark; but the
crowd

Heard the wail from the deep murmur hollow
and fell;

They hearken and shudder, lamenting aloud—
“Gallant youth—noble heart—fare-thee-well,
fare-thee-well!”

More hollow and more wails the deep on the ear—
More dread and more dread grows suspense in its
fear.

If thou shouldst in those waters thy diadem fling,
And cry, “Who may find it shall win it and
wear;

God wot, though the prize were the crown of a
king—

A crown at such hazard were valued too dear,
For never shall lips of the living reveal
What the deeps that howl yonder in terror conceal.

Oh, many a bark, to that breast grappled fast,
Has gone down to the fearful and fathomless
grave;

Again, crashed together the keel and the mast,
To be seen, tossed aloft in the glee of the
wave—

Like the growth of a storm ever louder and clearer,
Grows the roar of the gulf rising nearer and
nearer.

And it bubbles and seethes, and it hisses and
roars,

As when fire is with water commixed and con-
tending;

And the spray of its wrath to the welkin upsoars,
And flood upon flood hurries on, never ending;
And as with the swell of the far thunder-boom,
Rushes roaringly forth from the heart of the
gloom.

And, lo! from the heart of that far-floating
gloom,

What gleams on the darkness so swan-like and
white?

Lo! an arm and a neck, glancing up from the
tomb!—

They battle—the Man's with the Element's
might.

It is he—it is he! in his left hand behold,
As a sign—as a joy!—shines the goblet of gold!

And he breathed deep, and he breathed long,
And he greeted the heavenly delight of the day.
They gaze on each other—they shout, as they
throng—

“He lives—lo the ocean has rendered its prey!
And safe from the whirlpool and free from the
grave,
Comes back to the daylight the soul of the
brave!”

And he comes, with the crowd in their clamour
and glee,

And the goblet his daring has won from the
water,

He lifts to the king as he sinks on his knee;—
And the king from her maidens has beckoned
his daughter—

She pours to the boy the bright wine which they
bring,

And thus spake the Diver—“Long life to the
king!

“Happy they whom the rose-hues of daylight
rejoice,

The air and the sky that to mortals are given!
May the horror below never more find a voice—

Nor Man stretch too far the wide mercy of
Heaven!

Never more—never more may he lift from the
sight

The veil which is woven with Terror and Night!

“Quick-brightening like lightning—it tore me
along,

Down, down, till the gush of a torrent, at play
In the rocks of its wilderness, caught me—and

strong
As the wings of an eagle, it whirled me away

Vain, vain was my struggle—the circle had won
me,
Round and round in its dance, the wild element
spun me.

“And I called on my God, and my God heard my
prayer,
In the strength of my need, in the gasp of my
breath—

And showed me a crag that rose up from the lair,
And I clung to it nimbly—and baffled the
death!

And, safe in the perils around me, behold
On the spikes of the coral the goblet of gold.

“Below, at the foot of the precipice drear,
Spread the gloomy, and purple, and pathless
Obscure!

A silence of Horror that slept on the ear,
That the eye more appalled might the Horror
endure!

Salamander—snake—dragon—vast reptiles that
dwell

In the deep—coiled about the grim jaws of their
hell.

“Dark-crawled—glided dark the unspeakable
swarms,

Clumped together in masses, misshapen and vast—
Here clung and here bristled the fathomless forms—
Here the dark-moving bulk of the Hammer-fish
passed.

And with teeth grinning white and a menacing
motion,

Went the terrible Shark—the Hyæna of Ocean!

“There I hung, and the awe gathered icily o’er me,
So far from the earth, where man’s help there
was none!

The One Human Thing, with the Goblins before
me—

Alone—in a loneliness so ghastly—ALONE!
Fathom-deep from man’s eye in the speechless pro-
found,

With the death of the Main and the Monsters
around.

“Methought, as I gazed through the darkness, that
now

It saw—the dread hundred-limbed creature—its
prey!

And darted—O God! from the far flaming-bough
Of the coral, I swept on the horrible way;

And it seized me, the wave with its wrath and its
roar,

It seized me to save—King, the danger is o’er!”

On the youth gazed the monarch, and marvelled;
quoth he,

“Bold Diver, the goblet I promised is thine,
And this ring will I give, a fresh guerdon to thee,
Never jewels more precious shone up from the
mine;

If thou’lt bring me fresh tidings, and venture
again,
To say what lies hid in the innermost main?”

Then outspoke the daughter in tender emotion:

“Ah! father, my father, what more can there
rest?

Enough of this sport with the pitiless ocean—

He has served thee as none would, thyself hast
confest.

If nothing can slake thy wild thirst of desire,
Let thy knights put to shame the exploit of the
squire?”

The king seized the goblet—he swung it on high,

And whirling, it fell on the roar of the tide;

“But bring back that goblet again to my eye,

And I’ll hold thee the dearest that rides by my
side;

And thine arms shall embrace, as thy bride, I
decree,

The maiden whose pity now pleadeth for thee.”

In his heart, as he listened, there leapt the wild
joy—

And the hope and the love through his eyes
spoke in fire,

On that bloom, on that blush, gazed delighted the
boy;

The maiden—she faints at the feet of her sire!
Here the guerdon divine, there the danger beneath;

He resolves! To the strife with the life and the
death!

They hear the loud surges sweep back in their swell

Their coming the thunder-sound heralds along:
Fond eyes yet are tracking the spot where he fell,

They come, the wild waters, in tumult and throng,
Roaring up to the cliff—roaring back, as before,
But no wave ever brings the lost youth to the shore.

SCHILLER.

AN UNLUCKY MAN.

I AM an unlucky man. I was born unlucky, so
commenced my unlucky career very early, and
it has continued without a break. I have heard
people say they would rather be born lucky than
rich, and I fully reciprocate this statement; but I
even missed being born rich—it was my luck. I
soon gained a reputation for being a plain baby;
no pretty young lady would ever fondle me, and
call me her “ducky darling,” or kiss me, and make
a fuss of me. As a child in petticoats I never had
pennies given me to buy sweets, nor did I fare any
better when I went to school. I never enjoyed my-
self like other boys. If I ran in a paper-chase
across country, it was I who was caught by the
farmer, who either gave me a good thrashing or
else summoned me for trespassing. If I went

skating, I was sure to break through the hardest ice, and then receive a trouncing from my parents, instead of the parental sympathy I had a right to expect. I once discovered a bird's nest, and after successfully climbing the tree and procuring the eggs, I fell from the top and broke the eggs. It was just my luck. My run of bad luck is still predominant. If I go to the theatre, I generally find myself sitting behind a pillar or else a six-storey bonnet, which is just as bad—another instance of my ill-luck. I paid to a Fire Insurance Company for a policy on my house and furniture for twenty-five years, and hadn't the semblance of a fire about the place all that time, so I decided to pay no more money; but the very day after the policy ran out the house was burned down and not a single stick of my furniture was saved. That was about the cruellest slice of ill-luck that could have befallen me. And now I think I had better retire, lest I should be taxing your patience. I don't mind telling you, I generally get hisses instead of applause whenever I step on a public platform. It's just my luck!

A JAPANESE FAN.

How time flies! Have we been talking
For an hour?
Have we been so long imprisoned
By the shower
In this old oak-panelled parlour?
Is it noon?
Don't you think the rain is over
Rather soon?

Since the heavy drops surprised us,
And we fled
Here for shelter, while it darkened
Overhead;
Since we leaned against the window,
Saw the flash
Of the lightning, heard the rolling
Thunder crash;
You have looked at all the treasures
Gathered here,
Out of other days and countries
Far and near;
At those glasses, thin as bubbles,
Opal bright—
At the carved and slender chessmen,
Red and white—
At the long array of china
Cups and plates—
(Do you really understand them?
Names and dates?)
At the tapestry, where dainty
Shepherds stand,

Holding grim and faded damsels
By the hand,
All the while my thoughts were busy
With the fan
Lying here—bamboo and paper
From Japan.
Is it nothing—very common?
Be it so;
Do you wonder why I prize it?
Care to know?
Shall I teach you all the meaning,
The romance,
Of the picture you are scorning
With a glance?
From Japan! I let my fancy
Swiftly fly;
Now if we set sail to-morrow,
You and I,
If the waves were liquid silver,
Fair the breeze,
If we reached that wondrous island
O'er the seas,
Should we find that every woman
Was so white,
And had slender upward eyebrows
Black as night?
Should we then perhaps discover
Why, out there,
People spread a mat to rest on
In mid-air?

Here's a lady, small of feature,
Narrow-eyed,
With her hair of ebony straightness
Queerly tied;
In her hand are trailing flowers
Rosy sweet,
And her silken robe is muffled
Round her feet;
She looks backward with a conscious
Kind of grace,
As she steps from off the carpet
Into space;
Though she plants her foot on nothing,
Does not fall,
And in fact appears to heed it
Not at all;
See how calmly she confronts us
Standing there—
Will you say she is not lovely?
Do you dare?
I will not! I honour beauty
Where I can,
Here's a woman one might die for!
—In Japan.

*Read the passion of her lover—
All his soul
Hotly poured in this fantastic
Little scroll;

* See him swear his love, and vengeance,
 (Read his fate—
 You don't understand the language?
 I'll translate.

"Long ago," he says, "when summer
 Filled the earth
 With its beauty, with the brightness
 Of its mirth;
 When the leafy boughs were woven
 Far above;
 In the noonday I beheld her,
 Her—my love!
 Oftentimes I met her, often
 Saw her pass,
 With her dusky raiment trailing
 On the grass.
 I would follow, would approach her,
 Dare to speak,
 Till at last the sudden colour
 Flushed her cheek.
 Through the sultry heat we lingered
 In the shade;
 And the fan of pictured paper
 That she swayed,
 Seemed to mark the summer's pulses,
 Soft and slow,
 And to thrill me as it wavered
 To and fro.
 For I loved her, loved her, loved her,
 And its beat
 Set my passion to a music
 Strangely sweet.

"Sunset came, and after sunset,
 When the dusk
 Filled the quiet house with shadows;
 And the musk
 From the dim and dewy garden
 Where it grows,
 Mixed its perfume with the jasmine
 And the rose;
 When the western splendour faded,
 And the breeze
 Went its way, with good-night whispers
 Through the trees;
 Leaning out we watched the dying
 Of the light,
 Till the bats came forth with sudden
 Ghostly flight;
 They were shadows, wheeling, flitting
 Round my joy;
 While she spoke, and while her slender
 Hands would toy
 With her fan, which as she swayed it
 Might have been
 Fairy wand, or fitting sceptre
 For a queen;
 When she smiled at me, half pausing
 In her play,

All the gloom of gathering twilight
 Turned to day!
 Though to talk too much of heaven
 Is not well—
 Though agreeable people never
 Mention hell—
 Yet the woman who betrayed me—
 Whom I kissed—
 In that bygone summer taught me
 Both exist.
 I was ardent, she was always
 Wisely cool,
 So my lady played the traitor,
 I—the fool!"—
 Oh, your pardon! But remember,
 If you please,
 I'm translating—this is only
 Japanese.

"Japanese?" you say, and eye me
 Half in doubt:
 Let us have the lurking question
 Spoken out.
 "Is all this about the lady
 Really said
 In that little square of writing
 Near her head?"
 I will answer on my honour,
 As I can,
 Every syllable is written
 On the fan.
 Yes, and you could learn the language
 Very soon—
 Shall I teach you on some August
 Afternoon?

You are wearied. There is little
 Left to say;
 For the disappointed hero
 Goes his way,
 And such pain and rapture never
 More shall know.
 But he smiles—all this was over
 Long ago.
 I am not a blighted being—
 Scarcely grieve—
 I can laugh, make love, do most things
 But believe!

Yet the old days come back strangely
 As I stand
 With the fan she swayed so softly
 In my hand,
 I can almost see her, touch her,
 Hear her voice,
 Till, afraid of my own madness,
 I rejoice
 That beyond my help or harming
 Is her fate—
 Past the reach of passion—is it
 Love—or hate?

This is tragic! Are you laughing?
 So am I.
 Let us go—the clouds have vanished
 From the sky.
 Yes, and you'll forget this folly?
 Time it ceased,
 For you do not understand me
 In the least,
 You have smiled and sighed politely,
 Quite at ease—
 And my story might as well be
 Japanese!

MARGARET VELEY.

By permission of A. CUNNINGTON, Esq.

LITTLE BET.

"Tis a year just to-day, John, we lost little Bet,
 An' aw cannot help cryin' a bit,
 For there's mony a time that aw weary an' fret,
 When thou'rt gone to thi wark at the pit;
 An' the snow keeps a fallin' on yon little gravo,
 'Till it does seem so selfish an' hard
 For us two to be here, snug i' confort at home,
 An' her laid i' that cruel churchyard.

"Such a bright bonny babby as none niver see'd,
 Wi' her nice little cuddlin' ways;
 John, if thou'd been a drinker aw'm sure aw'd ha'
 dee'd,
 For mi love for that bab wur a craze;
 Them snowflakes fall heavy an' cowl on my heart,
 When aw feel that they're fallin' on her,
 Tho' aw know that it's foolish to tak' it like that,
 Still aw fret till aw hardly con bear.

"Tother children is good uns bot both on 'em's lads,
 Tho' aw love 'em for that none the less;
 Still aw felt as if Johnny an' Jim wur their dad's,
 An' that this one wur mine to caress;
 'Twur a new sort o' care, an' a new sort o' pride,
 Wur this bright little cuddlin' girl,
 Different cloas to mak', summat gentler to bide,
 An' such nice little ringlets to curl.

"Then aw reckoned hoo'd grow up a fine stirrin'
 lass,
 One as thou'd ha' begg' proud on, mi lad,
 An' ha' helped me a' whoam when the lads were at
 wark
 In the pit, takkin' share wi' their dad;
 But it wur not to be, an' aw'm silly to cry,
 Tho' hoo wur such a sweet pretty gem,
 For them lads is such rosy an' healthful young
 romps,
 Aw must larn to be grateful for them."

"Think like that, Meary lass, weren't aw crazy
 myself?
 When yon child took the fever an' died?
 But aw see'd thou wert crushed—more than ever
 tha'd tell—
 An' it browt me still nearer thi side;
 Aw wur crazed o'er our Bet, but wur frightened
 for thee,
 For aw couldn't lose both—bonny wife,
 An' when tha' took the fever an' bid fair to dee,
 How aw worked aw cawn't think for mi life!

"But tha' pulled bravely thro', an' when th' lads
 did so beg
 To coom whoam fro' their gronny's to thee,
 An' aw see'd thi lost look when tha' missed little
 Bet,
 When yon lads cried their mammy to see;
 An' aw see'd tha' wert cryin' wi' th' lads i' thi arms,
 For th' little lass, gone to her rest,
 An' aw bent down an' kissed thee an' begged thee
 be strong,
 For my sake an' the lads on thi breast.

"Dunnot fret thee, mi Meary, aw'm steady an' true,
 An' my heart beats wi' thine i' thi grief,
 Coom, sit closer by me, an' aw'll kiss them sweet
 tears,
 That bless thy poor heart wi' relief;
 Tho' the snowflakes fall heavy on yon little grave,
 Where we laid hur a year sin' to-day,
 Little Bet doesn't heed 'em, but prays for us both,
 Where the sun shines for ever and aye."

BRANDON THOMAS.

By permission of the Author.

MY FIRST "READING."

MANY years ago (I think it was in the autumn of 1858), I made an ambitious appeal to the public which I don't suppose anybody remembers but myself. I had at that time been about two years upon the stage, and was fulfilling my first engagement at Edinburgh. Like all young men, I was full of hope, and looked forward buoyantly to the time when I should leave the bottom rung of the ladder far below me. The weeks rolled on, however, and my name continued to occupy a useful but obscure position in the playbill, and nothing occurred to suggest to the manager the propriety of doubling my salary, although he took care to assure me that I was "made to rise." It may be mentioned that I was then receiving thirty shillings per week, which was the usual remuneration for what is termed "juvenile lead."

At last a brilliant idea occurred to me. It happened to be vacation time—"preaching week,"

as it is called in Scotland—and it struck me that I might turn my leisure to account by giving a reading. I imparted this project to another member of the company, who entered into it with enthusiasm. He, too, was young and ambitious. It was the business aspect of the enterprise which fired his imagination; it was the artistic aim that excited mine. When I promised him half the profits, but not before, he had a vision of the excited crowd surging round the doors, of his characteristic energy in keeping them back with one hand and taking the money with the other; and afterwards, of the bags of coin neatly tied and carefully accounted for, according to some admirable system of book-keeping by double entry. This was enough for me, and I appointed him to the very responsible position of manager; and we went about feeling a deep compassion for people whose fortunes were not, like ours, on the point of being made.

Having arranged all the financial details, we came to the secondary but inevitable question—Where was the reading to be given? It would scarcely do in Edinburgh; the public there had too many other matters to think about. Linlithgow was a likely place. Nothing very exciting had occurred in Linlithgow since the Regent Murray was shot by Hamilton of Bothwell Haugh. The whole town was probably weary of that subject now, and would be grateful to us for cutting out the Regent Murray with a much superior sensation. My friend the manager accordingly paid several visits to Linlithgow, engaged the Town Hall, ordered the posters, and came back every time full of confidence. Meanwhile, I was absorbed in "The Lady of Lyons," which, being the play that most charmed the fancy of a young actor, I had decided to read; and day after day, perched on Arthur's Seat, I worked myself into a romantic fever, with which I had little doubt I should inculcate the good people of Linlithgow.

The day came which was to make or mar us quite, and we arrived at Linlithgow in high spirits. I felt a thrill of pride at seeing my name for the first time in big capitals on the posters, which announced that at "eight o'clock precisely Mr. Henry Irving would read 'The Lady of Lyons.'" This was highly satisfactory, and gave us an excellent appetite for a frugal tea. At the hotel we eagerly questioned our waiter as to the probability of there being a great rush. He pondered some time, as if calculating the number of people who had personally assured him of their determination to be present; but we could get no other answer out of him than "Nane can tell." Did he think there would be fifty people there? "Nane can tell." Did he think that the throng would be so great that the Provost would have to be summoned to keep order? Even this audacious proposition did not induce him to commit himself, and we were left to infer that, in his opinion, it was not at all unlikely.

Eight o'clock drew near, and we sallied out to survey the scene of operations. The crowd had not yet begun to collect in front of the Town Hall, and the man who had undertaken to be there with the key was not visible. As it was getting late, and we were afraid of keeping the public waiting in the chill air, we went in search of the door-keeper. He was quietly reposing in the bosom of his family, and to our remonstrance replied, "Ou, ay, the reading! I forgot all about it." This was not inspiring, but we put it down to harmless ignorance. It was not to be expected that a man who looked after the Town Hall key would feel much interest in "The Lady of Lyons."

The door was opened, the gas was lighted, and my manager made the most elaborate preparations for taking the money. He had even provided himself with change, in case some opulent citizen of Linlithgow should come with nothing less than a sovereign. While he was thus energetically applying himself to business, I was strolling like a casual spectator on the other side of the street, taking some last feverish glances at the play, and anxiously watching for the first symptoms of "the rush."

The time wore on. The town clock struck eight, and still there was no sign of "the rush." The manager mournfully counted and recounted the change for that sovereign. Half-past eight, and not a soul to be seen—not even a small boy! It was clear that nobody intended to come, and that the Regent Murray was to have the best of it after all. I could not read "The Lady of Lyons" to an audience consisting of the manager, with a face as long as two tragedies, so there was nothing for it but to beat a retreat. No one came out even to witness our discomfiture. Linlithgow could not have taken the trouble to study the posters, which now seemed such horrid mockeries in our eyes. I don't think either of us could for some time afterwards read any announcement concerning "eight o'clock precisely" without emotion.

We managed to scrape together enough money to pay the expenses, which operation was a sore trial to my speculative manager, and a pretty severe tax upon the emoluments of the "juvenile lead." As for Linlithgow, we voted it a dull place, still wrapped in mediæval slumber, and therefore insensible to the charms of the poetic drama and to youthful aspirations after glory. We returned to Edinburgh the same night, and on the journey, by way of showing that I was not at all cast down, I favoured my manager with selections from the play, which he good-humouredly tolerated, though there was a sadness in his smile which touched my sensitive mind with compassion.

This incident was vividly revived in my mind twenty years afterwards, as I passed through Linlithgow on my way from Edinburgh to Glasgow, in which cities I gave, in conjunction with my friend Toole, two readings on behalf of the sufferers

by the Glasgow Bank failure, which produced a large sum of money. My companion in the Linlithgow expedition was Mr. Edward Saker, subsequently one of the most popular managers in the provinces.

SIR HENRY IRVING.

By permission of the Author.

THE SMUGGLER'S GHOST.

DID you ever encounter the smuggler's ghost,

The spectre of Smuggling Bill,
As he leaned himself on an old gun-post
At the top of Tower Hill?
I think me not, though he comes by night
All the passers-by to scan:
A strange, weird, long-shore lubberly wight—
Pea-jackety sort of man.

His voice is husky, his eye rolls wild—
The other is under a patch—
His nose is swollen—this mystic child—
And his legs were never a match.
As he leaves the post on a midnight dull
He goes with a nautical roll,
A solid mahogany, seaside hull
He seems: but he's only soul.

I met him once, and I saw him clear
By a gaslamp's dancing light,
Recalling weeds and tobacco dear
That I bought of a smuggler wight;
And I said, "O runner of Revenue rigs,
Thou knave of the contraband,
I'll have thee elapped with the rogues and prigs;"
But he raised him his gnarled hand:—

"Avast with thy coppers!" and "You be blowed!"
In a mixture strange said he;
"I'm in spirits now, and I can't be stowed
In this mortal coun-ter-ee.
Not sham blue ruin in bladdery skin,
Nor tater-brewed oh-da-wee,
That ain't paid dooty," he said with a grin,
"I'm a spectre, mate, can't yer see?"

I looked him up and I looked him down,
And I thought of my four pound five
I paid for cigars when he did me brown,
And he certainly looked alive.
But he gave me a goblin goose-skin leer,
As he grinned with his mouth so roomy,
"If yer doubts my word, take yer crutch-stick
Theer,
And you'll find it'll go right through me!

"Oh, woe, woe, bacco and brown paper!
Oh, woe, sham oh-de-wee!
I'm Smuggler Bill, and I've come from down
In the furdereest coun-ter-ee;

For I was the wickedest smuggler be'l
That never did go to sea;
I sold cigars and the buyers sold,
And what's to become o' me?"

"Oh, down by Wapping and Poplar way,
And down by the muddy Strand,
And down by the Docks I'm doomed to stray;"
And he wrung him each gnarled hand.
"I wants to find 'em, and can't tell where,
'And I doesn't know where to look:
There's' pounds upon pounds, and there's pounds
to spare,
As I hid afore I was took."

Then I said, "Oh, seaman of doubtful guise,
Do you come from that other shore?"
"Ay, mate!" and he rolled him that one of his
eyes.

"And I don't want to go any more."
"But what are you seeking, and why are you
come?"

Why playedst thou me that trick?"
"Oh, it's all along o' those weeds so hum!
Did they make you so werry sick?"

"It's what I'm a-telling o' you, you see,"
And to east and to west he turned;
"I can't remember, or may I be
Most—something unpleasantly—burned."
He moaned as he gave me a mournful gaze,
He groaned him right into his boots;
"Oh, it's all along o' them Henery Clays,
And them sham Bengal cheroots.

"For there's pounds on 'em hidden I can't tell
where,
And some misfortnet bloke
Will be hunting 'em out if I don't take care,
And there isn't one fit to smoke.
Oh! where did I put them? Oh, where are they
hid?"

Oh, where did I plant that chest
With Henery Clay on the top o' the lid?
And wasn't they bad 'uns, jest!

"They makes 'em up at a bob a pound—
Brown paper in backer gravy;
And I sold 'em a quid for a box all round,
On a smuggler's affidavit.
And down by the Isle o' Dogs, I goes,
And a-huntin' in Ratcliff Highway,
But never them weeds shall I find, I knows,
And they'll never more come in my way.

"I never can take just a glass o' short,
Though I drops in at public bars,
Since I belongs to another port,
For selling o' sham cigars.
For I used to roam as a smuggler bold
Who laughed at the R'yal Excise;
A dodge so stale, and a dodge so old,
But allers ripe for a rise."

And as I gazed he was there no more,
 Not so much as his old pea-jacket;
 But there seemed to come from a distant shore,
 Or from out of old Charon's packet,
 "Oh, I am the wickedest smuggler bold
 That never did go to sea;
 I never get hot, and I never grow cold,
 In this hide-and-come-seek-a-ree!"

GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

By permission of the Author.

7 FROM INDIA.

"O, COME you from the Indies, and, soldier, can you tell
 Aught of the gallant goth, and who are safe and well?
 O, soldier, say my son is safe; for nothing else I care—
 And you shall have a mother's thanks—shall have
 a widow's prayer."

"O, I've come from the Indies—I've just come from the war;
 And well I know the goth, and gallant lads they are;
 From Colonel down to rank and file, I know my comrades well,
 And news I've brought for you, mother, your Robert bade me tell."

"And, do you know my Robert now? O, tell me, tell me true,
 O, soldier, tell me, word for word, all that he said to you.
 His very words—my own boy's words—O, tell me every one!
 You little know how dear to his old mother is my son."

"Through Havelock's wars and marches the goth were there;
 In all the gallant goth did, your Robert did his share;
 Twice he went into Lucknow, untouched by steel or ball,
 And you may bless your God, old dame, that brought him safe through all."

"O, thanks unto the living God that heard his mother's prayer,
 The widow's cry that rose so high her only son to spare;
 O blessed be God, that turned from him the sword and shot away;
 And what to his old mother did my darling bid you say?"

"Mother, he saved his Colonel's life, and bravely it was done;

In the despatch they told it all, and named and praised your son,
 A medal and a pension's his; good luck to him, I say,
 And he has not a comrade but will wish him well to-day."

"Now, soldier, blessings on your tongue; O, husband, that you knew
 How well our boy pays me this day for all that I've gone through,
 All I have done and borne for him the long years since you're dead!
 But, soldier, tell me how he looked, and all my Robert said!"

"He's bronzed, and tanned, and bearded, and you'd hardly know him, dame;
 We've made your boy into a man, but still his heart's the same;
 For often, dame, he talks of you, and always to one tune,
 But there, his ship is nearly home, and he'll be with you soon."

"O, is he really coming home, and shall I really see
 My boy again, my own boy, home; and when, when will it be?
 Did you say soon?"—"Well, he is home—keep cool, old dame, he's here."
 "O, Robert, my own blessed boy!"—"O, mother, mother dear!"

W. C. BENNETT.

By permission of the Author.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH AND THE "MURPHIES."

MANY generations ago there appeared at the English Court a young fellow by the name of Sir Walther Rolly. He was a darin' soger an' a darin' navigathor, but wud all his navigatin' an' sogerin' he could never keep his mind off the money. Day an' night he was always dhramin' of goold; an' nothing was too hot or too heavy for him so long as there was goold at the bottom of the job. Wan minute he'd go an' discover a new counthry out of the bowels of the unknown says, an' another minute he'd start an' knock the day-lights out of the French army or the Spanish Army. O! he was a darin' man altogether an' no mistake; but the money, as I've towld you, was always in his mind.

Of coorse he didn't do his thravellin' and sogerin' for nothing, but he found 'twasn't aisy at all to make a big fortune; the Court had so many pickin's out of everything. Aich an' every wan in the Court was bustin' wud jealousy of young Walther, an' of coorse they all used their endayvours to cut

Rolly's share down to the lowest penny whinever he brought a cargo of diamonds into port, or nabbed a treasure-ship from the King of Spain.

Well, wan day Rolly was greatly put out to thry an' discover some new dodge for turnin' in the money. He bethought him at last that as there was a dale of dhrinkin' goin' on in his own counthry, he'd turn his undhertakin' factory—I must tell you Rolly was at one time Undhertaker in Ordinary to Her Majesty Queen Eleezabeth—into a place for manufacturin' barrels to lowld wine, beer, and sperits; so he enthered into private contracks for supplyin' all England wud barrels an' casks, an' 'tis a fine thrade he had of it so long as the timber on the estate held out.

But at last the woods were mostly cleared, an' then poor Rolly didn't know for the minute what use to make of the land, so he rode over to his friend Spinser, an' he towld him of his troubles.

"Couldn't you sell the factory to a Company?" says Spinser.

"A grand idaya!" says Rolly. "But sure they'd be sindin' over an inspektor to see how the land lay, an' if they found timber was scarce in the neighbourhood they'd never float the business in the market."

"Can't you get a frind to inspect it at this side of the wather?" says Spinser.

"Sure, they wouldn't believe the daylight out of an Irishman!" says Rolly, curlin' his lip.

"I know that," says Spinser, wud a wink; "but maybe you could get an Englishman to do the job for you?"

"I see what you're dhrivin' at," says Rolly, "an' I'm much obliged to you. What fee will you be axin'?"

"I'll lave that to yerself," says Spinser.

"All right," says Rolly; "let us dhrافت the survey at wance."

"I couldn't do that," says Spinser. "I must have my own time to think over the job."

"How tall will you make the trees?" axes Rolly.

"Any heighth you like," says Spinser. "Of coorse I can see trees two hundred feet high where a blade of grass couldn't grow."

"Of coorse," says Rolly. "That's part of your thrade."

"I wish you could get thrade an' money-grubbin' out of your head sometimes," says Spinser, wud a sigh. "It's partly your own thrade as well as mine; for, considerin' all the time I've lost listenin' to you readin' your ballads here, I suppose we may look upon yerself as bein' in the poethry line."

"Ay," says Rolly. "Begor," says he, laughin', "it's wonderf'ul how aisy people'll swally a lie when you puts it into grand langwidge. The yarns I've spun 'em about the goold an' diamonds in ould Virginny 'ud make your hair stand on end, if you wor only to see the counthry wud your own eyes."

"I partly guessed so," says Spinser, "or we wouldn't have had yerself in the coffin business."

"That's a sore point," says Rolly, "so the laiste said about it the better. The thing is now to pitch it into 'em sthrong about the terrible big forest that surrounds my factory. You could tell 'em the sun never gets a chance to shine in the buildin', an' that we have to work all day by candlelight."

"Ay," says Spinser, "or maybe moonlight 'ud sound more illigant?"

"Wisha! how the dickens could the moon get a look in if the sun couldn't? Moreover," says Rolly, "the moon doesn't shine by day."

"Begor, I never thought of that," says Spinser. "I'm afraid you'd botch the job altogether," says Rolly; "an' a better plan than floatin' a Company strikes me. I'll plough up all the land, and sow it wud spuds."

"Wud what?" axes Spinser.

"Spuds!" says Rolly. "Potayties! But sure I clane forgot," says he, "that ye never had any of 'em in these parts."

"What are they at all at all?" axes Spinser.

"They're roundy little balls for aitin', an' fine whoesome food they are too. I've lived on 'em in Virginny for weeks at a time, an' never 'ud ax for anything wud 'em, barrin' a pinch of salt."

"Do you ate 'em raw?" axes Spinser.

"No," says Rolly; "you puts 'em into a pot of boilin' wather until they grows soft an' malady—regular balls of flour if they're properly attinded to—an' thin you takes the skin off 'em, and swallys 'em."

"I'm sure," says Spinser, "they'd go well wud a red herrin'."

"You're right there; or wud a bit of Watherford bacon aither," says Rolly, smackin' his lips.

"Do you think they'd grow here?" axes Spinser.

"What's to hendher 'em?" says Rolly; "good soil an' plenty of rain is all they requires, an' sure they can have that *galore* here. The land is well manured now with native corpses, for, bein' a contract job, of coorse I made the coffins as shlander as a sheet of mournin' paper; an' as for the rain, why it rains here day an' night all the year round! I'll warrant the spuds 'ud take to the ground like the shamrock."

"Then the sooner you gets 'em over the better," says Spinser, "for I'm towld there's no crops at all here this year."

"I'll send out a few ships from Youghal Harbour to-morrow," says Rolly, "wud an order on the King of Virginny."

So wud that Sir Walther bids good-night to his friend, an' rides back to Youghal. The next day he goes down to the harbour, an' he charts half a dozen little vessels, an' he puts 'em all under the command of a Captain Murphy, an' off they starts for Virginny.

While the ships was at say, Rolly takes a thrip over to London to see Queen Eleezabeth, an' begor her Majesty fell completely in love with him now, an' thried hard to coax him into stoppin' at the Coort. 'Tis like enough Sir Walther an' the Queen would have made a bowlit of it, an' set up shop in Virginny, only about that time Rolly fell in love saycritly wud another party. Eleezabeth partly guessed this, but she didn't let on to him that she suspected him, an' in ordher to thry an' make him jealous she took up wud another young lord about the Coort, and towld Rolly in a timper he might go back agin to his beer-barrels in Munsther. He took her Majesty at her word, an' off he sails agen for Youghal, where he knew the ships from Virginny were about due now.

He wasn't long back from the Coort, whin Captain Murphy arrived with the other five ships, all loaded down to the scuppers wud new potatyties. Rolly started dischargin' 'em at wance, an' it wasn't long until he had the factory full of illigant spuds from flure to ceilin'. He sent round word to all the neighbourhood that "Sir Walther Rolly, General-Undhertaker to Her Majesty Queen Eleezabeth, was now dischargin' a splendid sample of the best Virginny Champions, wan cargo for seed, an' the rest for food." But much to his surprise the deuce a wan 'ud buy a stone of 'em at any price, for all the neighbours thought it was only a new dodge of Rolly's to destrhoy 'em by pizenin' 'em wud the spuds. He sent round his hundhred follyers as commercial thravellers all through Munsther, but of coorse this only set the few people that was left alive worse than ever agen the new species of grub. He even threatened to put the undhertakin' business into full swing wance more on his own hook; but even that didn't frighten the Munsther people into aitin' the spuds, or the "murphies," as he called 'em afther Captain Murphy that brought 'em over from Virginny.

All through the sayson Rolly didn't lave a stone unturned to thry an' induce the people to buy his potatyties; an' begor three parts of 'em rotted in the factory.

At last, when he was almost distracted wud disappointment, he hit on a plan that worked merces.

Himself and his friend Spinser, an' Rolly's hundred follyers, used to go down into the Youghal market-place day afther day, an' there they'd form a ring an' boil the murphies in sight of the people, an' stop aitin' 'em from mornin' until 'night. By degrees the people got thryin' a spud now an' again, an' actin' on Spinser's advice, Rolly supplied red herrin's gratis. In the coorse of a few weeks all the neighbourhood around was doin' nothin' but aitin' the potatyties all day long in the market-place. When Rolly saw how he had worked the oracle, an' that they'd now buy for seed on any terms, he jumped the price to four times what he'd axed in the beginnin', an' before the sayson was over he

had sowld every seed potatyt in the factory at his own price, besides sowin' his own property over an' hether wud 'em.

Thin he began charterin' all the ships in Youghal, an' he started off himself for Virginny, to enter into a heavy contrahct wud the king there.

EDMUND DOWNEY.

*From "Through Green Glasses,"
By permission of the Author.*

TOLD AT THE FALCON.

ANOTHER flagon, old friend? Of course, I knew what you would say!

Ah! we've drained a few together, Hal, since we knew each other, eh?

When two old brother soldiers meet to gossip o'er days gone by,

If they're not to moisten their throats a bit, the devil's in't, say I!

Ho there! No, tapster friend, not you; just send the damsel here!

Hi! Margery—Cicely—what's your name? Fill up again, my dear;

There's a good girl! What eyes she has, and lips more charming still!

Here, taste, my dear, and pledge us a toast. You won't; well, then I will!

"Here's health to all the pretty girls!"—Hullo, she's gone, I see!

"And a double health to our Merry King, Prince Charlie that used to be!"

If it wasn't for me the crown mayhap had never graced his brow:

You smile, but it's true. Here, drink again, and I'll tell you the story now.

You know our place, half-moated grange, half-ruin'd castle gray,

My master's, Hubert Moulton's, where you found me out to-day;

There I was born, and thence I went, in youth's all-joyous spring,

To fight with glorious Capel's host for country and for King.

'Twas there I met you first, old friend, and ah! what days they were!

Of fighting, flirting, feast, and fray, methinks we had our share.

And when Old Noll had won the game—O curs'd, heavy hour!

Where should the broken soldier fly, but back to Moulton Tower?

The Squire was old and laid aside; his gallant son was fled;

And only Mistress Kate was left to watch beside his bed;
And so they 'scaped the Cropheads' ire. E'en Noll, that canting churl,
Could hardly wreak his wrath upon an old man and a girl.

Time was, the Squires of Moulton Tower owned all the country-side;
And now, though gone their ancient power, they kept their ancient pride;
Old state and customs still they loved. My keys hung at my breast,
Half warder and half cellarer—I liked the last the best.

I'faith, but Merry England then was but a grue-some place;
The man who made his way was he who pull'd the longest face—
No May-day, Christmas, Martinmas, nor junketings, nor fairs;
But 'stead of bluff old English sports, long faces and long prayers.

Not long, thought I, will Englishmen 'neath such a thralldom groan,
The time of reck'ning yet will come, the King will have his own!
And when I knew he'd come at last, with Scotland's chivalrie,
I long'd to join his glorious host; but it was not to be.

Well do I mind the woful day when, full of throbbing fears,
Sweet Mistress Kate came down to me, her pale face stain'd with tears:
"O, Michael, all is lost!" she said; "our beaten host has fled,
And left the King a fugitive—a price upon his head!

"And, Michael"—here her voice sank low, her face was ashen white—
"His Grace, with my poor brother too, will sojourn here to-night;
See the Priest's Hole's prepared; and mind, not a word nor sign;
If aught befall him here 'twould break my father's heart and mine!

"My-cousin Hugh is here, you know, and ah, though seeming kind,
I know him for a false weak man, the sport of every wind.
'Twas but to-day I heard him say Old Noll was much belied,
And none but fools were ever found upon the losing side.

"God grant I do him grievous wrong!—he comes of loyal race;

But well, I wot, he knows of old our ancient hiding-place;
And much I fear, to serve himself—O cruel, bitter shame!—
He might be tempted to a deed I hardly dare to name.

"So vile a sin would stain our race until the end o' time;
My cousin must be kept by force from risk of such a crime!
I told my father so, and he but laugh'd at me to-day,
But I have talk'd him o'er at last to let me have my way.

"Listen: Hugh Moulton loves to walk in our old Pleasance fair,
It was but now he said to me that I should find him there;
Get trusty help, and while mayhap he broods o'er snare and plot,
Gag, seize, and bind him suddenly; but see you harm him not.

"You know the Friar's Cell below; there he must lie to-night;
Unloose him, mind, and use him well, but see the bolts are right.
Then should the Roundhead bloodhounds come, gag, bind him quick once more,
And thrust him in the secret vault that opens from the floor.

"Two days from now his Grace, please God, will be upon the sea;
Two days my cousin Hugh must lie safe under lock and key.
See he has food and wine to spare. Be wary, fearless, true;
No matter how he threats and fumes, no harm shall come to you.

"I know you true as steel of old! O fail me not to-day!
Here's gold, and when the King—but see, my cousin comes this way!
Methinks I read mistrust and guile upon that moody brow!—
Remember, Michael!—Ah, good coz, how fares it with you now?"

Ho, ho! but you should have seen him, Hal!—shall I ever forget the sight?
When we loosed him at last in the Friar's Cell, panting, dishevell'd, white!
I'd hardly thought such horrible oaths from human lips could flow—
And I used to be pretty fair myself at that sort of thing, you know.

"I only obey my orders," I said, "'tis idle to rave at me;

No harm is meant you, Master Hugh, and you'll soon again be free.

But understand me once for all, you may rave, or swear, or shout,

But here you are, and here you'll stay till my betters let you out!"

I left him then to sober down, and sought out Mistress Kate:

"Thanks, Michael, thanks!" she said. "Now list: to-night we watch and wait.

My brother Hubert's message said ere midnight they'd be near!"

When you shall hear his whistle thrice, then haste to meet me here!"

And faith, at dead o' night, as though 'twere some dark deed o' sin,

The signal came, the bolts were drawn, two muffled men stole in:

A moment Mistress Kate's fair head lay on her brother's breast,

The next she turn'd with reverence to greet her kindly guest!

"Welcome, in my sick father's name and mine, to Moulton Tower!

God grant your Grace may come again in some more happy hour!"

Then bent to kiss his hand; but nay! "At beauty's shrine," he said,

"Kings should be worshippers!" and stoop'd and kiss'd her lips instead.

Young Hubert gave me greeting kind; then stole they up the stair,

And soon the house was still as though no anxious hearts were there.

But in my watch at dawn I heard the hum o' voices near,

And Mistress Kate flew breathless down: "O, Michael, they are here!"

Too true! the Crothead curs were out! As swift as words can tell

The Prince was warn'd, Hugh Moulton gag'd, and in the secret cell!

Then while they thunder'd at the door I flung it open wide:

"What would you here at such an hour?" "Stand back!" the leader cried.

And in they tramp'd with clash o' steel and torches' lurid glare,

And swarm'd the place, and search'd and peer'd from roof to cellar there;

They sounded panels, hammer'd walls; and once, with gasping start,

Sweet Mistress Kate turn'd white as death; and well she might, dear heart!

But baffled, beaten, wearied out, at last they slunk away:

"Hugh Moulton must have play'd us false!" I heard their leader say;

And Mistress Kate she heard him too, with lips that quiver'd sore,

And in her eyes I caught a look was never there before.

Two days his Grace lay hid with us ere yet 'twas safe to go,

And three days more Hugh Moulton frowned within his cell below:

Then when we got the welcome news the King was on the sea,

Fair Mistress Kate came down herself to set her cousin free.

He tried to fume, but quail'd before her scornful eyes and brow:

"Cousin, I did but doubt you once! alas! I know you now.

Listen: the King was here—is gone—has sail'd, while you, poor churl,

Lay quaking in your cell—ha, ha!—outwitted by a girl!

"Haste to your Cromwell, if you will, and tell him all you know,

And don't forget the Friar's Cell, good cousin mine. Now go!"

And cowering from her splendid scorn, he slunk away for fear!—

That's all; and faith, I'm mighty dry: just pass the flagon here.

EDWIN COLLIER.

From "*Homespun Yarns*."

By permission of EDMUND DURRANT, Esq.

COBUS HAGELSTEIN.

Ich bin ein Deutscher, und mein name is Cobus Hagelstein,

I coom from Cincinnati, und I life peyond der Rhine;

Und I dells you all a shitory dot makes me mad ash blitz,

Pout how a Yangee gompany vos schwindle me to fts.

I heardt apout dis gompany, und vished to see dot same,

Das Lebensfeuerversicherungsgesellschaft vos ids name;

Dot is de name in Sherman—in English it will say

Dot it insures your life mit fire, ven you de money pay.

Now, I hod a liddle houselein where I life so ahtill ash mice,

Und yoost drei tousand dollar vos dot liddle
pilding's brice;
I vos always yoost so happy ash ein Kaiser in der
land,
Dill at last I kit in drople, for mein hous vos
abgebraunt.

Den I goes undo dot gompany und dells em right
afay

(Das Lebensfeuerversicherungsgesellschaft), und I
say,

"At last, de youngest day ist coom for you to
plank de cash

And you most bay de monies, for mine haus is
purned to ash."

Den de segredary answered, "All dis is fery drue,
Boot you know ve have de option to pild your
house anew;

Dere is a lot of beoplus vos burns deir hauser
down,

Den coom to kit de money pack all over in de
town."

I look in do de bapers und I find it ash he say,
Das Lebensfeuerversicherungsgesellschaft need not
bay;

So I dells em all to go ahiet und pild anoder
shdore,

Und dey make me von in Yangeo shdyle more
petter ash pefore.

Den I met der segredary derafter on a day,
Of Das Lebensfeuerversicherungsgesellschaft, und
he say,

"You've found oos vellers honoraple und honest in
our line,

Vy tont you go insure de life of Madame Hagel-
stein?"

I poots mine dum oopon mine nose, und vinks him
mit mine eye,

Und says, "I cooms to do it ven de ocean runs
dry,

Ven gooses turn to ganders, und de bigs kits
shanged to shvine;

Oh, den I makes insure de life of Madame Hagel-
stein.

"I haf-dried you on insurance, ash you know, yust
vonce pefore,

Und von mein haus vos abgebraunt you pild anoder
shdore;

Id's drue you pild it goot enough, boot I dell you
allaweil,

I vos liket id moosh petter if it vos in Sharman
shdyle.

"Now, if I goes insure my wife anoder dime mit
you,

Das Lebensfeuerversicherung, I knows vot I
would do—

If from dis vorltd Frau Hagelstein should rise to
Himmel life,
Insstead of paying gelt you'd kit tor me a Yangeo
vife!"

I poots mine dum pelow mine eye, und vinks him
innerrily,

Und say, "Go find soom Deutscherman dot is more
creen ash me,

Dere's blendy of dem creen enough, I know, peyond
der Rhein,

Boot none among dem wears de name of Cobus
Hagelstein."

CHAS. GODFREY LELAND.

From "The Breitmann Ballads."

By permission of Messrs. KEGAN PAUL, TRÜBNER,
TRENCH & Co.

A MOST UNCOMMON PATIENT.

It is a most extraordinary thing, but I never read a patent medicine advertisement without being impelled to the conclusion that I am suffering from the particular disease therein dealt with in its most virulent form. The diagnosis seems in every case to correspond exactly with all the sensations I have ever felt. I remember going to the British Museum one day to read up the treatment of some slight ailment of which I had a touch—hay fever, I fancy it was. I got down the book, and read all I came to read, and then, in an unthinking moment, idly turned the leaves and began indolently to study diseases generally. I forgot which was the first distemper I plunged into—some fearful, devastating scourge I know—and before I had glanced half-way down the list of "premonitory symptoms" it was borne in upon me that I had fairly got it.

I sat for a while frozen with horror; and then in the listlessness of despair, I again turned over the pages. I came to typhoid fever, read the symptoms—discovered that I had typhoid fever, must have had it for months without knowing it—wondered what else I'd got; turned up to St. Vitus' dance—found as I expected that I had that too—began to get interested in my case, and determined to sift it to the bottom, and so started alphabetically—read up ague, and learnt that I was sickening for it, and that the acute stage of the disease would commence in about another fortnight. Bright's disease, I was relieved to find, I had only in a modified form; and so far as that was concerned, I might live for years. Cholera I had, with severe complications; and diphtheria I seemed to have been born with. I plodded conscientiously through the twenty-six letters, and the only malady I concluded I had not got was the housemaid's knee.

I felt rather hurt about this at first; it seemed

somehow to be a sort of a slight. Why hadn't I got housemaid's knee? Why this invidious reservation? After a while, however, less grasping feelings prevailed. I reflected that I had every other malady in the pharmacology, and I grew less selfish, and determined to do without housemaid's knee. Gout in its most malignant stage, it would appear, had seized me without my being aware of it; and from zymosis I had evidently been suffering from boyhood. There were no diseases after zymosis, so I concluded there was nothing else the matter with me.

I sat and pondered. I thought what an interesting case from a medical point of view, what an acquisition I should be to a class! Students would have no need to "walk the hospitals" if they had me. I was a hospital myself. All they had to do would be to walk round me, and, after that, take their diploma.

Then I wondered how long I had to live. I tried to examine myself. I felt my pulse. I could not at first feel any pulse at all. Then, all of a sudden, it seemed to start off. I pulled out my watch and timed it. I made it 147 to the minute. I tried to feel my heart. I could not feel my heart. It had stopped beating. I have since been induced so come to the opinion that it must have been there all the time, and must have been beating, but I cannot account for it. I patted myself all over my front, from what I call my waist up to my head, and I went a bit round each side, and a little way up my back. But I could not feel or hear anything. I tried to look at my tongue. I stuck it out as far as ever it would go, and I shut one eye, and tried to examine it with the other. I could only see the tip, and the only thing I could gain from that was to feel more certain than before that I had scarlet fever.

I had walked into that reading-room a happy, healthy man; I crawled out a decrepit wreck.

I went to my medical man. He is an old chum of mine, and feels my pulse, and looks at my tongue, and talks about the weather—all for nothing, when I fancy I am ill; so I thought I would do him a good turn by going to him now.

"What a doctor wants," I said, "is practice. He shall have me. He will get more practice out of me than out of 1700 of your ordinary, commonplace patients, with only one or two diseases each." So I went straight up and saw him, and he said:

"Well, what's the matter with you?"

I said, "I will not take up your time, dear boy, with telling you what is the matter with me. Life is brief, and you might pass away before I had finished. But I will tell you what is *not* the matter with me; I have not got the housemaid's knee. Why I have not got the housemaid's knee, I cannot tell you; but the fact remains that I have not got it. Everything else, however, I *have* got."

And I told him how I came to discover it all.

Then he opened me, looked down me, clutched

hold of my wrist, and then hit me over the chest when I wasn't expecting it—a cowardly thing I call it—and immediately afterwards butted me with the side of his head. After that he sat me down and wrote out a prescription, and folded it up and gave it me, and I put it in my pocket and went out.

I did not open it. I took it to the nearest chemist, and handed it in. The man read it, and then handed it back. He said he didn't keep it.

I said, "You are a chemist?"

He said, "I am a chemist. If I was a co-operative stores and a family hotel combined, I might be able to oblige you. Being only a chemist hampers me."

I read the prescription. It ran:

"One pound beefsteak.

One pint bitter beer every six hours.

One ten-mile walk every morning.

One bed at 11 sharp every night.

And don't stuff your head with things you don't understand."

I followed the directions, with the happy result—speaking for myself—that my life was preserved, and is still going on.

JEROME K. JEROME.

From "*Three Men in a Boat*."

By permission of the Author.

TWO ON A SPAR.

It was the wreck of a mighty ship—

And can two lives be won,
That are clinging hard, in death's last grip,
To the spar that can scarce hold one?

From the same town both, they had led one life,
On the wild sea toss'd and hurl'd;
But Billy had won Jack's love to wife,
And Jack was alone in the world.

Alone in the world—without goal to win,
Or rudder to guide his bark,
His soul had plunged through reefs of sin,
Ignorant, reckless, dark.

But Billy was all that a man should be—
He went to church on shore:
He loved his wife and his children three,
And what can a tar do more?

"We shall both be drowned, if we cling," cries he,
"To a spar that can scarce hold one:
And I have a wife and children three,
And you, old man, have none.

"Give me a chance, for the sake of my wife,
Return, Jack, good for ill!"
Cries Jack, "What chance have I had in life?
You've had all the chances, Bill.

"It seems you've a'most had more than your share
Of the good things here below;
And 'cause, if he dies, there is none to care,
Is that why a man must go?

"Where? . . . Ah! you have nothing to be
forgiven,
You're safe enough when you die.
But, Bill, there is never a door in Heaven
For one that's as bad as I!

"Yet, for her sake, man, the spar shall rise
Lighter, as I go down—
How could I live, if her grieving eyes
Told me I'd let ye drown?

"It is done! . . . I have dropp'd from the bit
of wood . . .
I am down in the trough of the sea . . .
Tell her I died, as a poor chap should,
And may God have mercy on me!

"Never a heart on shore to miss me! . . .
But who is this walks the waves?
Leans o'er my face, as if to kiss me?
Can it be He who saves?

"Can He, like me, be poor and lonely?
On earth, has He no friends there,
That He comes o'er the sea, to greet me only,
And bid me not despair?

"Is this a shower of stars around me,
Or is it the dawn at last?
Or can it be that Christ has found me,
And pardons me all my past?

"I only know I'm at peace . . . contented
For you, old man, to die . . .
Say, when you kiss her, that I repented
Of all my sins . . . Good-bye!"

HAMILTON AYDÉ.

By permission of the Author.

THE PORTRAIT.

MIDNIGHT past! Not a sound of aught
Through the silent house, but the wind at his
prayers.

I sat by the dying fire, and thought
Of the dear dead woman upstairs.

A night of tears! for the gusty rain
Had ceased, but the eaves were dripping yet,
And the moon look'd forth, as though in pain,
With her face all white and wet.

Nobody with me, my watch to keep,
But the friend of my bosom, the man I love:
And grief had sent him fast to sleep
In the chamber up above.

Nobody else, in the country place
All around, that of my loss ber'de,
But the good young Priest with the Raphael-face,
Who confess'd her when she died.

That good young Priest is of gentle nerve,
And my grief had moved him beyond control;
For his lips grew white, as I could observe,
When he speeded her parting soul.

I sat by the dreary hearth alone:
I thought of the pleasant days of yore:
I said, "The staff of my life is gone:
The woman I love is no more.

"Gem-clasp'd on her bosom my portrait lies,
Which next to her heart she used to wear—
It is steep'd in the light of her loving eyes,
And the sweets of her bosom and hair."

And I said, "The thing is precious to me:
They will bury her soon in the churchyard clay;
It lies on her heart, and lost must be,
If I do not take it away."

I lighted my lamp at the dying flame,
And crept up the stairs that creak'd for fright,
Till in the chamber of death I came,
Where she lay all in white.

The moon shone over her winding-sheet,
There, stark she lay on her carven bed:
Seven burning tapers about her feet,
And seven about her head.

As I stretch'd my hand, I held my breath;
I turn'd as I drew the curtains apart;
I dared not look on the face of death:
I knew where to find her heart.

I thought, at first, as my touch fell there,
It had warm'd that heart to life, with love;
For the thing I touched was warm, I swear,
And I could feel it move.

'Twas the hand of a man that was moving slow
O'er the heart of the dead—from the other side:
And at once the sweat broke over my brow,
"Who is robbing the corpse?" I cried.

Opposite me, by the tapers' light,
The friend of my bosom, the man I loved,
Stood over the corpse, and all as white,
And neither of us moved.

"What do you here, my friend?" . . . The man
Look'd first at me, and then at the dead.
"There is a portrait here . . ." he began;
"There is. It is mine," I said.

Said the friend of my bosom, "Yours, no doubt,
The portrait was, till a month ago,
When this suffering angel took that out,
And placed mine there, I know."

"This woman, she loved me well," said I.

"A month ago," said my friend to me:

"And in your throat," I groan'd, "you lie!"

He answer'd "Let us see."

"Enough!" I return'd, "let the dead decide:

And whose soever the portrait prove,

His shall it be, when the cause is tried,

Where Death is arraign'd by Love."

We found the portrait there, in its place:

We open'd it by the tapers' shine:

The gems were all unchang'd: the face

Was—neither his nor mine.

"One nail drives out another, at least!

The face of the portrait there," I cried,

"Is our friend's, the Raphael-faced young Priest,

Who confess'd her when she died."

OWEN MEREDITH.

By permission of LADY LYTTON.

MRS. POYSER HAS HER SAY OUT.

It was probably owing to the conversation she had had with her husband on their way from church concerning this problematical stranger, that Mrs. Poyser's thoughts immediately reverted to him when, a day or two afterwards, as she was standing at the house-door with her knitting, in that eager leisure which came to her when the afternoon cleaning was done, she saw the old Squire enter the yard on his black pony, followed by John the groom. Something unwonted must clearly be in the wind, for the old Squire's visits to his tenantry were rare; and though Mrs. Poyser had during the last twelvemonth recited many imaginary speeches, meaning even more than met the ear, which she was quite determined to make to him the next time he appeared within the gates of the Hall Farm, the speeches had always remained imaginary.

"Good-day, Mrs. Poyser," said the Squire, peering at her with his short-sighted eyes. "Is your husband at home?"

"Yes, sir, he's only in the rick-yard. I'll send for him in a minute, if you'll please to get down and step in."

"Thank you, I will do so. I want to consult him about a little matter; but you are quite as much concerned in it, if not more. I must have your opinion too."

"Hetty, run and tell your uncle to come in," said Mrs. Poyser, as she entered the house, and the old gentleman bowed low in answer to Hetty's curtsy.

"What a fine old kitchen this is!" said Mr. Donnithorne, looking round admiringly. "And you keep it so exquisitely clean, Mrs. Poyser. I

like these premises, do you know, beyond any on the estate."

"Well, sir, since you're fond of 'em, I should be glad if you'd let a bit o' repairs be done to 'em, for the boardings i' that state, as we're like to be eaten up wi' rats and mice, and the cellar you may stan' up to your knees i' water in't, if you like to go down; but perhaps you'd rather believe my words. Won't you please to sit down, sir?"

"Thank you," said Mr. Donnithorne. "Ah, Poyser, how do you do? In the midst of business, I see, as usual."

Mr. Poyser had just entered in shirt-sleeves and open waistcoat, with a face a shade redder than usual, from the exertion of "pitching."

"Will you please to take this chair, sir?" he said, lifting his father's armchair forward a little; "you'll find it easy."

"No, thank you, I never sit in easy-chairs," said the old gentleman, seating himself on a small chair near the door. "Do you know, Mrs. Poyser—sit down, pray, both of you—I've been far from contented for some time with Mrs. Satchell's dairy management. I think she has not a good method, as you have."

"Indeed, sir, I can't speak to that," said Mrs. Poyser, in a hard voice, rolling and unrolling her knitting, and looking icily out of the window, as she continued to stand opposite the Squire. Poyser might sit down if he liked, she thought: *she* wasn't going to sit down, as if she'd give in to any such smooth-tongued palaver. Mr. Poyser, who looked and felt the reverse of icy, did sit down in his three-cornered chair.

"And now, Poyser, as Satchell is laid up, I am intending to let the Chase Farm to a respectable tenant. I'm tired of having a farm on my own hands—nothing is made the best of in such cases, as you know. A satisfactory bailiff is hard to find, and I think you and I, Poyser, and your excellent wife here, can enter into a little arrangement which will be to our mutual advantage."

"Oh!" said Mr. Poyser, with a good-natured blankness of imagination as to the nature of the arrangement.

"If I'm called upon to speak, sir," said Mrs. Poyser, after glancing at her husband with pity at his softness; "you know better than me; but I don't see what the Chase Farm is t' us—we've cumber enough wi' our own farm. Not but what I'm glad to hear o' any body respectable coming into the parish; there's some, as ha' been brought in as hasn't been looked at i' that character."

"You're likely to find Mr. Thurle an excellent neighbour, I assure you: such a one as you will feel glad to have accommodated by the little plan I'm going to mention, especially as I hope you will find it as much to your own advantage as his."

"Indeed, sir, if it's anything t' our advantage, it'll be the first offer o' the sort I've heard on. It's them as take advantage that get advantage i' this

world, I think; folks have to wait long enough afore it's brought to 'em."

"The fact is, Poyser," said the Squire, ignoring Mrs. Poyser's theory of worldly prosperity, "there is too much dairy land and too little plough land on the Chase Farm to suit Thurle's purpose—indeed, he will only take the farm on condition of some change in it: his wife, it appears, is not a clever dairy-woman, like yours. Now, the plan I'm thinking of is to effect a little exchange. If you were to have the Hollow Pastures, you might increase your dairy, which must be so profitable under your wife's management; and I should request you, Mrs. Poyser, to supply my house with milk, cream, and butter at the market prices. On the other hand, Poyser, you might let Thurle have the Lower and Upper Ridges, which really, with our wet seasons, would be a good riddance for you. There is much less risk in dairy land than corn land."

Mr. Poyser was leaning forward, with his elbows on his knees, his head on one side, and his mouth screwed up, apparently absorbed in making the tips of his fingers so as to represent with perfect accuracy the ribs of a ship. He was much too acute a man not to see through the whole business, and to foresee perfectly what would be his wife's view of the subject, but he disliked giving unpleasant answers. Unless it was on a point of farming practice, he would rather give up than have a quarrel any day, and after all it mattered more to his wife than to him. So after a few minutes' silence, he looked up at her and said mildly, "What dost say?"

Mrs. Poyser had had her eyes fixed on her husband with cold severity during his silence, but now she turned away her head with a toss, looked only at the opposite roof of the cowshed, and spearing her knitting together with the loose pin, held it firmly between her clasped hands.

"Say! Why, I say you may do as you like about giving up any o' your corn land, afore your lease is up, which it won't be for a year come next Michaelmas Lady Day; but I'll not consent to take more dairy work into my hands, either for love or money; and there's nather love nor money here, as I can see, on'y other folks's love o' themselves, and the money as is to go into other folks's pockets. I know there's them as is born t' own the land, and them as is born to sweat on't"—here Mrs. Poyser paused to gasp a little—"and I know it's christened folks's duty to submit to their betters as fur as flesh and blood 'ull bear it; but I'll not make a martyr o' myself, and wear myself to skin and bone, and wurret myself as if I was a churn wi' butter a-coming wi't, for no landlord in, England, not if he was King George himself."

"No, no, my dear Mrs. Poyser, certainly not," said the Squire, still confident in his own powers of persuasion, "you must not overwork yourself; but don't you think your work would rather be lessened

than increased in this way? There is so much milk required at the Abbey, that you will have little increase of cheese and butter making from the addition to your dairy, and I believe selling the milk is the most profitable way of disposing of dairy produce, is it not?"

"Ay, that's true," said Mr. Poyser.

"I daresay," said Mrs. Poyser bitterly, turning her head halfway towards her husband, and looking at the vacant armchair. "I daresay it's true for men as sit i' th' chimney-corner and make believe as everything's cut wi' ins an' outs to fit int' everything else. If you could make a pudding wi' thinking o' the batter, it 'ud be easy getting dinner. How do I know whether the milk 'ull be wanted constant? What's to make me sure as the house won't be put o' board-wage afore we're many months older, and then I may have to lie awake o' nights wi' twenty gallons o' milk on my mind—and Dingall 'ull take no more butter, let alone paying for it; and we must fat pigs till we're obliged to beg the butcher on our knees to buy 'em, and lose half o' 'em wi' the measles. And there's the fetching and carrying, as 'ud be welly half a day's work for a man an' boss—that's to be took out o' the profits, I reckon? But there's folks 'ud hold a sieve under the pump and expect to carry away the water."

"That difficulty—about the fetching and carrying—you will not have, Mrs. Poyser," said the Squire; "Bethell will do that regularly with the cart and pony."

"Oh, sir, begging your pardon, I've never been used t' having gentlefolks's servants coming about my backplaces, a-making love to both the gells at once, and keeping 'em with their hands on their hips listening to all manner o' gossip when they should be down on their knees a-scouring. If we're to go to ruin, it shanna be wi' having our back kitchen turned into a public."

"Well, Poyser," said the Squire, shifting his tactics, and looking as if he thought Mrs. Poyser had suddenly withdrawn from the proceedings and left the room, "you can turn the Hollows into feeding land. I can easily make another arrangement about supplying my house. And I shall not forget your readiness to accommodate your landlord as well as a neighbour. I know you will be glad to have your lease renewed for three years, when the present one expires; otherwise, I daresay Thurle, who is a man of some capital, would be glad to take both the farms, as they could be worked so well together. But I don't want to part with an old tenant like you."

To be thrust out of the conversation in this way would have been enough to complete Mrs. Poyser's exasperation, even without the final threat. "Then, sir, if I may speak," she broke in, "as, for all I'm a woman, and there's folks as thinks a woman's fool enough to stan' by and look on while the men sign her soul away, I've a right to speak, for I

make one quarter o' the rent, and save th' other quarter—I say, if Mr. Thurle's so ready to take farms under you, it's a pity but what he should take this, and see if he likes to live in a house wi' all the plagues o' Egypt in't—wi' the cellar full o' water, and frogs and toads hoppin' up the steps by dozens—and the floors rotten, and the rats and mice gnawing every bit o' cheese, and runnin' over our heads as we lie i' bed till we expect 'em to eat us up alive—as it's a mercy they hanna eat the children up long ago. I should like to see if there's another tenant besides Poyser as 'ud put up wi' never having a bit o' repairs done till a place tumbles down—and not then, on'y wi' begging and praying, and having to pay half—and being strung up wi' the rent, as it's much if he gets enough out o' the land to pay, for all he's put his own money into the ground beforehand. See if you'll get a stranger to lead such a life here as that: a maggot must be born i' the rotten cheese to like it, I reckon. You may run away from my words, sir," continued Mrs. Poyser, following the old Squire beyond the door—for after the first moments of stunned surprise he had got up, and waving his hand towards her with a smile, had walked out towards his pony. But it was impossible for him to get away immediately, for John was walking the pony up and down the yard, and was some distance from the causeway when his master beckoned.

"You may run away from my words, sir, and you may go spinnin' underhand ways o' doing us a mischief, for you've got Old Harry to your friend, though nobody else is; but I tell you for once as we're not dumb creatures to be abused and made money on by them as ha' got the lash i' their hands, for want o' knowing how t' undo the tackle. An' if I'm th' only one as speaks my mind, there's plenty o' the same way o' thinking i' the parish and the next to 't, for your name's no better than a brimstone match in everybody's nose—if it isn't two-three old folks as you think o' saving your soul by giving 'em a bit o' flannel and a drop o' porridge. An' you may be right i' thinking it'll take but little to save your soul, for it'll be the smallest savin' y'iver made wi' all your scrapin'."

"Thee'st done it now," said Mr. Poyser, when his wife re-entered the house.

"Yis, I know I've done it," said Mrs. Poyser, "but I've had my say out, an' I shall be th' easier for't all my life. There's no pleasure i' living, if you're to be corked up for iver, and only dribble your mind out by the sly, like a leaky barrel. I shan't repent saying what I think, if I live to be as old as th' old Squire; and there's little likelihoods—for it seems as if them as aren't wanted here are th' only folks as aren't wanted i' th' other world."

"But thee wotna like moving from th' old place, this Michaelmas twelvemonth," said Mr. Poyser, "and going into a strange parish, where thee

know'st nobody. It'll be hard upon us both, and upo' father too."

"Eh, it's no use worretin'; there's plenty o' things may happen between this and Michaelmas twelvemonth. The Captain may be master afore then, for what we know," said Mrs. Poyser, inclined to take an unusually hopeful view of an embarrassment which had been brought about by her own merit, and not by other people's fault.

"I'm none for worretin'," said Mr. Poyser, rising from his three-cornered chair, and walking slowly towards the door; "but I should be loath to leave th' old place, and the parish where I was bred and born and father afore me. We should leave our luck behind us, I doubt, and niver thrive again."

GEORGE ELIOT.

From "*Adam Bede*."

By permission of Messrs. BLACKWOOD & SONS.

AVENGED!

READ me no more—leave me, for pity's sake—
You do but mock me with your texts and prayers!
You come to comfort me? to speak to me
Of pardon and of peace? Ah, sir, forbear—
You know not what you do! Comfort to me?
There is no word in all that Holy Book
Can whisper peace into my restless soul—
No blessing that your sacred office yields
Can give me pardon in this weary world,
Or in the world beyond. Yet you are kind—
Indeed I am not thankless;—stay awhile,
If you can bear with me, and hear me out;
Then hate me, spurn me, curse me if you will,
But do not seek to comfort me again!

How can I tell you of the bygone days
When life was one long, happy holiday,
And sunny hours of fleeting gladness sped
That knew no chilling cloud of grief or pain?
Yes—I was happy once;—sometimes in dreams
I wander through the peaceful village street,
The little world that bounded in my life,
And, from the doorway of our cottage home,
My gentle, grey-haired mother's patient face
Smiles a sweet welcome on her only child.
Ah me—those happy days! Why should *he* come
To steal away the sunshine of my life,
And quench it in a rain of bitter tears?
I loved him, aye, I loved him, and he lied;—
And when the golden sea of harvest rolled
Over the land once more, it left behind
A broken wreck of honour, love, and hope,
A ruined life—a tiny, nameless grave.

So the grey months of sullen sadness passed,
While the twin vultures of Despair and Shame
Gnawed ever at my heart—and day by day,
In silent grief and unreproachful love

My broken-hearted mother pined and wept.
But when the winter brightened into spring
There crept a village whisper in my ear
That he was coming back; and my despair
Glowed into *funny* as the rumour grew
That he was coming to bring home his bride.
They came—I marked them pass our blighted
home—

She looking lovingly into his face,
And he, caressing her with that false smile
That once had lied to me; and as they passed
A thousand devils leapt within my heart,
And by my nameless babe's unhallowed grave,
I swore to be avenged upon them both.

So passed a year; and on the self-same day
Their child was born—his child and hers—I stood
And held my dying mother's hand, I heard
Her last forgiving words of gentle love,
And, weeping, closed her tear-worn eyes in rest.

Despised, dishonoured, friendless, and alone!
My cup of bitterness had overflowed;
And with an aching heart I left the home
Where all my life had passed, and hid my shame
Amid strange faces in the town hard by.

Then lagged the months in sullen loneliness;
But still my purpose faltered not—for still
The demons never slept within my heart,
Whose whispered poison throbbed through every
pulse—

“Revenge—your child—revenge!” And while I
schemed,

Behold, the hours of one more dreary year
Outran my tardy purpose. Then came news
Of fever in the village; and anon
I knew that he was dead. But they lived yet;
The avenging hand that laid one victim low
Had spared the mother and the child for me.

The autumn mists lay dank above the fields,
The dead brown leaves swirled in the fitful breeze,
The autumn twilight deepened into night,
As, with my vengeance ripened in my heart,
I sought the village that had been my home,
And, listening, stood without her cottage door.
The door was open, but the lights were low,
Nor on my ear fell any sound of life.
Then, with the guilty footsteps of a thief
I stole into the parlour, where the babe
Lay in its tiny cot against the wall,
And on the table some half-finished work
Told of the watching mother, called away
Or some brief errand while her baby slept.
“‘Tis well!” I cried, “the Devil prospers me!”—
Then seized the sleeping babe within my arms
And fled into the darkness—pausing not
Until I stood within the lonely fields
Where, through the chilly curtain of the mist,
The village lights gleamed faint and far away.
Around me all was stillness;—save the wind,

Sighing dead summer's dirge amid the trees,
No sound disturbed the silence; 'till the babe,
Awake and shivering within my arms,
Sent forth a wailing cry, that drove me on
Whither some beacon-finger beckoned me—
A dark and stagnant pool, o'ergrown with weeds,
Whose muddy depths, thick with a noisome slime,
Breathed forth contagion to the air around.
“Avenged! Avenged!”—the devils at my heart
Leapt at the word! But, lo! the helpless babe
Put forth its tiny hand and touched my face
As with a soft caress. Long time I stood,
Immovable, beside the water's brink;
Then slowly, slowly turned and crept away,
The baby hand still pressed against my cheek,
And passed into the shadow of the night.

The icy breath of morn swept from the hills,
The rosy light flushed faintly in the east,
But still, as in a dream, I wandered on:
And, as the child lay trembling at my breast,
Moaning with pain, and fighting for its breath,
The fire of vengeance that had scorched my heart
Sank into lifeless ashes, and there woke
A mighty longing and a sickening fear,
And all that day I hid from human eye,
Save when I sought a lonely wayside farm
For food to give the child, that only moaned
And drooped and pined, and shivered in my arms.

The sombre shadows of another night
Were darkening o'er the meadows, as I stole
Back through the peaceful lanes I knew so well,
Till, with the babe still clasped against my breast,
I reached the churchyard gate. The fleeting clouds
Passed from the silver pathway of the moon,
Whose ghostly ray fell on a new-made grave;
And kneeling by its side with white, wan face
And streaming eyes, behold! a woman prayed.
The chill night breeze came whispering idly past,
Bearing upon its wing the piteous cry,
“God send me back my child—my little child!”
And as the mother in her anguish knelt
By the dead father's grave, I felt the babe
That lay upon my bosom start and stir,
Then, draw one convulsive, shuddering breath,
And stiffen in my arms; and while I prayed
That death might strike me too, yet once again,
That other prayer came floating through the night,
“God, give me back my child—my little child!”

But all at once the woman raised her head
And looked towards the gate. Then, with a scream
Of wild, delirious joy, she bounded forth.

“My prayer is heard—thank God! my prayer is
heard!

My babe—you bring my babe—my little child!
God bless you! God reward you!” And she knelt
And kissed my hands, and clung about my knees,
Then caught my lifeless burden in her arms
And gazed upon its face. And as I turned
And fled into the shadow, there arose

Upon the night a shrill and piercing cry—
 A cry of utter, desolate despair,
 Whose deathless wail sounds ever in my ear
 Its note of dreadful doom: Accurs'd!
 No peace in life or death. For at the last
 A babe's soft hand shall thrust me down from
 Heaven,
 And through the awful realms of endless woe
 A mother's cry shall ring for evermore!

ALFRED BERLYN.

By permission of the Author.

LOVE'S INQUISITION.

How often have I been in love?
 What an exhaustive query!
 To count the stars that shine above
 Not more my mind would weary.

You blush for me? I see you do,
 Your blushes are becoming,
 You want to hear the whole list through?
 Well, I'll attempt the summing.

My first love? Oh! those cunning curls
 The wind blew all about so,
 My rose of roses, pearl of pearls—
 I wish you wouldn't pout so!

My second? Well, of course, she's fair,
 Not tall, but very stately;
 She's sweet and kind beyond compare,
 She's—Yes: I've seen her lately.

I ought to be ashamed to—I'm not;
 I didn't start the question,
 You asked me to describe the lot;
 You're sure 'twas my suggestion?

Well, I'll "go on," of course I will.
 Let's see, the third was impish;
 As bright as steel and never still,
 Her hair inclined to crimson.

She used to dote on me, I know,
 At least, she said so often,
 A heart as hard as rock, to dough
 Her sunny smile would soften.

I loved the rustle of her dress,
 I loved the—Don't be silly!
 All right, I won't, but don't distress
 Yourself to be so chilly.

Don't be sarcastic, but proceed
 To Number Four?—With pleasure,
 She is the sort of girl you read
 About; in fact, a perfect treasure.

Her eyes would thrill me through and through,
 And—Shade of General Harrison!
 When just she kissed me, honeydew
 Was acid by comparison!

I loved that girl with all my heart,
 I'll love her to my dying
 Day—What? You and I had better part?
 You hate me? Why, you're crying!

Don't, dear! The list that I repeat
 I only mean in fun, love;
 Fair, icy, impish, sunny sweet,
 You are all of them in one, love.

You are my first love and my last,
 I'll never love another;
 Kiss me, and say the storm is past:
 Confound it! Here's your mother!

By permission of PHIL. ELIOT, Esq.

I AND MY FATHER-IN-LAW.

A MONOLOGUE.

I KNEW it must come to this at last! [*Pacing up and down.*] Jack and I have had a row, and with all the meanness of a man he has managed to get the last word by bouncing out of the room and banging the door. And all for what, if you please? All for just nothing at all. But that's always the way. Everything is always about nothing. Just because—what do you think? Simply because—merely because I've overdrawn my account for the third time in the last twelvemonth! The first time it occurred he paid up like a man and placed a fresh sum to my credit. The next time he grumbled, like a man; but when I said, "Jack, dear, do it the second time," he did it the second time. And now that it has occurred again, he has been swearing—like a man; oh, very like a man! and when I began: "Jack, *darling*, do it the third time," he replied he'd be hanged if he would! It was in vain that I argued that I *must* dress, *must* give to charities, *must* have everything I want. He answered that I must cut my coat according to my cloth, and that charity ought to begin at home, and all those ridiculous old platitudes which people always fall back upon when they're angry. And then he bounced out of the room, and his last words were, "It's no use my talking. I shall send my father to you, and perhaps he'll be able to make you listen to reason." [*Flings herself into a chair.*] Oh, I'm the most miserable of women! I've quarrelled with Jack; I've not got a sixpence; and Sir John is coming to make me listen to reason! I don't want to listen to reason. I don't want to see Sir John! I can manage Jack all right by myself, but Sir John terrifies me out of my senses. The first time he came to see us after we were married, he asked me if I kept a meat-book; and he hoped I should always be content with a low rate of interest for my money. I said, "Dear Sir John, I will never condescend to anything low; I like all things high—high game, high steppers, high rate

of interest." I believe he observed after that he was afraid I was flippant; and he trusted Jack would find out that he had made a very poor bargain. And *this* is the man who is coming to make me listen to reason! Hush! there's the bell! [*Listens.*] Surely he can't be coming already. No; I don't think it was the front-door bell after all. It was only the muffin-man. Now, how shall I take Sir John? I think I'll try the pathetic, on my knees—so [*kneels*], hands clasped—so [*clasps her hands*]. "Yes, I know! I know! Call me anything you please—foolish, idiotic, mad as a hundred hatters—I'm all that and worse! I've nothing to say for myself; I've nothing to plead as an excuse. But consider my youth, consider my inexperience, consider the atmosphere in which I was brought up! Why, in my family we were taught to fling away pounds as if they were farthings; taught, think of that! Oh! instead of gazing at me with that stern countenance, take me and teach me to do better. You could teach me if you would; and I—I would learn, oh, so willingly!" Here I should break down utterly—so [*collapses on the floor*]. And then he will take me by the two hands—so [*extends her hands*], and raise me up tenderly—so [*raises slowly to her feet*], and kiss me kindly on both cheeks—so [*snakes as if she were being kissed*], and then he will say, "Bless you, my dear child"; and so the victory will remain with me. Yes; only I can't quite fancy Sir John blessing me. Hush! there's the bell. [*Listens.*] It is the front-door this time. He's really coming. [*Stands waiting.*] No. He doesn't seem to be coming at all. I wonder who it is. [*Looks out of the window.*] Only old Lady Alicia leaving her cards! Now, how shall I take Sir John? [*Reflects.*] I think I shall try the indignant, very upright—so [*draws herself up*], head well back—so [*throws her head back*]. "Let me tell you, Sir John, once for all, that I am not accustomed to be addressed in such terms as foolish, idiotic, much less as mad as a hundred hatters; and I must insist—yes, I must insist on your giving me the explanation I have a right to expect." When I—no, don't interrupt me, please—when I did your son the honour of marrying him, it was on the distinct understanding that I was to do as I liked. In my family we understand the value of money every bit as well as you, only we understand it in a somewhat different way. But if the manner of my upbringing was to be flung in my teeth as a cause of complaint, you should have put it in the Settlements. As this was not done, neither my husband nor my father-in-law has a right to call my conduct in question; and that there may be no mistake, I take this opportunity of putting my foot down at once." Here I shall stamp my foot. [*Stamps.*] Sir John's breath will be quite taken away; he will spread out his arms in a deprecating kind of way, so—[*spreads out her hands*],—and will murmur hurriedly, "My dear lady, I assure you I

meant nothing of the kind." And the victory will remain with me. Yes; only I can't quite fancy Sir John's breath being taken away. Hush! there's the bell. This must be him. [*Listens.*] He's had plenty of time to get Jack's message. [*Stands waiting.*] No; he doesn't seem to be coming after all. I suppose it was only the post. Now, how shall I take Sir John? [*Reflects.*] I think—yes, I know. I'll try the familiar and the pert. Throw myself into a chair, so—[*throws herself into a chair*],—look at him archly, so—[*looks over her shoulder*].—"You know you don't mean it, really. You were never hard upon a woman in your life, Sir John. I'm sure you never were. Now, look here, it's no use pretending that you're not like the rest of them. You like to see a pretty woman well dressed. Nonsense! don't talk to me; of course you do! A man of your taste and all! Eh? Ah! I've found you out!" Here I shall shake my finger at him, so—[*shakes her finger*]. "And I'm not a bit afraid of you, you know; not a bit. No; I never was; from the very first I always thought you and I would understand each other. And I'm sure we do, perfectly. Now, give me a kiss and let's make it up. That's right; I'm sure you feel better now, don't you?" If I had a fan I would tap him with it here. Then Sir John would chuck me under the chin, so—[*chuckles herself under the chin*],—and call me a "little puss." And so the victory will remain with me. [*Rises.*] Yes; only I can't quite fancy Sir John chucking me under the chin, or calling me a "little puss." Hush! there's somebody coming upstairs. It must be him. There can't be any mistake this time. I hear the tramp of feet. [*Stands waiting.*] No; it's only the servant. [*Turns as if addressing some one at the door.*] What is it? A letter? Give it me. [*A letter is handed in to her; she continues as if still addressing some one at the door.*] What? I can't hear what you say. A gentleman wants to know if I will see him? Didn't he give his name? What? He didn't give his name because he said I should understand? [*Aside.*] Yes, of course, I understand. Why didn't you say I was not at home? What? I hadn't given any orders? Well, say I'm very sorry, but I can't see any one this afternoon. What? I wish you would speak a little more distinctly. Very particular? Yes, I know he's very particular; that's why I don't want to see him. Say I'm very sorry, but I can't see any one this afternoon. That will do. [*To herself again.*] I wonder if he'll take offence at such a message. It's rather a dreadful thing to say to one's father-in-law. Falls rather flat, too, after the way in which I meant to receive him. [*Whilst talking she opens her letter.*] Hullo! Why, what in the name of Fortune is this? [*Reads.*] "Dear Madam,—We have the honour to inform you that, under the will of the late Mr. Puffin, you are become entitled to fifteen thousand pounds,

free of legacy duty, which will be paid into your account so soon as the necessary formalities have been gone through. One of our firm will wait upon you with this letter to take any instructions you may have to make.—We remain, Madam, yours obediently, Brown, Jones & Robinson." Dear old Mr. Puffin! I lent him my hymn-book once in church, and he always said he would remember me in his will; but, of course, I never thought he would. Fifteen thousand pounds! Now, let Sir John come and make me listen to reason. I shall know how to take him. [*Walks round triumphantly, brandishing the letter; stops suddenly.*] One of the firm would call! Then it was one of the firm who wanted to see me. Oh, dear! Oh dear! I hope my message wasn't given correctly. Don't want to see him? Of course I want to see him most particularly. Perhaps he's not gone yet; I'd better go down myself and see. [*Exit in a great hurry.*] H. L. CHILDE-PEMBERTON.

From "Twenty Minutes."

By permission of the Author.

THE PEACEMAKER.

For twenty years the King had reigned,
Most honoured and renowned;
For twenty years he'd waged a war
Upon a hostile ground.

His country's blood was being drained,
The costs were most immense;
And yet the King pursued that war,
Regardless of expense.

Howe'er, one day his royal Mate
Was taken very ill;
Physicians to the Palace hied
To exercise their skill.

But worse and worse the patient grew,
In spite of all their pains,
Until the cause they found to be
A leakage in the drains!

A plumber came, and plumbed away
(As plumbers often will),
For eighteen months, or thereabouts;
Then brought his little bill.

On seeing that the King grew pale,
His sable hair turned white;
His lips went blue, his eyeballs rolled,
And terror seized him quite.

At once he signed a lasting peace,
The only thing to do—
He could not run that costly war,
And pay the plumber too!

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

By permission of

Messrs. DIPROSE, BATEMAN & CO.

FARMER GOULD'S STORY.

THE jovial yeoman, Gilbert Gould,
Sat with his guests at close of day:
'Twas the evening of September first,
And a partridge shooting party they.
They talked and quaffed in the firelight's play:
"Now, Gould, your tale of Facing the Bull!"
Cried Farmer Fletcher across the blaze;
And the cry was echoed by all the guests:
"Your story, Gould, in honest praise
Of old-fashioned love in these modern days!"

"How spin the months along, my friends!"
Quoth Gilbert Gould anon;
"And so sin' last you heard my tale,
A fair twelvemonth has gone.
And sin' that lady and her lad
Stepped in the black bull's way,
A fair five years have scampered by—
Five years this very day.
You ken my great score-akker field
Which slopes about the hill?"
"Aye sure, Gould, aye!" quoth all the guests,
As each his glass did fill.
"Well, that was where I lodged my bull
Which I meant should take the prize;
But it were a stunner! Black as hell,
And a devil i' both his eyes!"

"You knew the winsome widow, friends,
O' rare old Captain Gaze?"
"Aye sure, Gould, aye!" out spoke the guests,
And each his glass did raise.
"Her son was just turned fourteen years,
Both grit and gentle, too—
Wi' golden locks and dimpled cheeks,
And his mother's eyes of blue.
The widow looked upon him
As her treasured gift from God;
And the laddie a'most worshipped her
And the very ground she trod.
'Twas the last day of his holidays
Was that September first;
And when it came, the mother yearned
Like as her heart would burst.
'Charlie,' she said, 'my darling boy,
We'll spend our last few hours
In rambling by the hedgerows
To gather the fair wild flowers.'
'Yee, mother,'—and Charlie kissed her lips—
'And I'll preserve them dear;
I'll place a flower in every book
My long schooldays to cheer.'

"The winsome widow and pretty lad
Went wandering through the fields,
Plucking such dainty flowers and grass
As the mead or hedgerow yields;
They rambled past the still pike pool,
Past the sawyer's rumbling mill.

Till they reached my great score-akker field
Which slopes about the hill.
Of course my warnin' board was there,
Clamped to the lone oak tree :
'Beware the Bull !' was writ so large,
As old and young might see.
I think, my friends, you'll bear me out,
My sign was large and plain ?"
"Aye sure, Gould, aye !" the guests all hummed,
And sipped assent again.
"Well, whether it were those two dear souls
Were blind with fond delight,
Or whether they were deep engrossed
Rangin' their flowers aright,
I couldna say—nor p'raps could they ;
The simple fact I state,
They passed the style—they passed the oak—
Right on to meet their fate !

"The bull was browsing on the slope,
And eyed them pass the tree !
He lowered his devil's own eyes and horns,
And spurned wi' rage or glee,
He swerved his head and snuffed the turf,
His snout was reeked and glazed,
And his cloven hoofs now smote the earth,
Like the devil himself amazed.
'O, mother, listen ! Hark, that roar !
What means that fearful sound ?
The flowers are trembling from our hands,
What means this quaking ground ?'
With arms closed round each other's forms
Up t'wards the slope they glance,
They hear, they see the snorting bull
With furied speed advance !
Then rose a shriek to the mother's lips
Which echoed round hill and dell ;—
What agony that cry bespoke
Mothers alone can tell !
Then rushed the blood from the lad's fair cheeks,
His mother's cry to hear ;
Yet that blood but rushed to his little heart
To drown all sense of fear.
'Mother,' the little champion cried,
His heart with courage full,—
'The tree, the tree ! Fly to the tree !
Leave me to face the bull !'

"The brave lad struggled from her side,
And boldly stood at bay ;
And there exposed his childish form
Straight in the black bull's way !
With lashing tail and blazing eyes
The beast came thundering on ;
'O, mother, don't come back !' he cried,
'Leave me to die alone !'
But no, the mother would return ;
She leapt before her child,
She turned her breast to the horrid beast,
And prayed in accents wild ;

'O Thou Almighty Power above,
Let me die, not my boy,—
Take me, mad beast !" she shrieked aloud,
'I die, I die with joy !'
The monster's horns were glistening
The mother's breasts before,
His eyes intact, his neck low bent
To make his fatal gore ;
When his eyes were instant blinded
And churned into his hide,
Wi' partridge shot, and a stunning blow
From a gun's butt-end beside !
And then the black bull bit the earth,
And gasped his strength away,
Until he rolled at the mother's feet,
A lump of lifeless clay.

"Yes, friends, the One above had heard
When that heart-wrung prayer arose ;"
"Aye sure, Gould, aye !" half sobbed the guests,
And each one blew his nose.
"He heard it, friends, sure as you or I
Did hear that echoing scream,
Whilst we were bentin' the stubble-field
Across the sawyer's stream.
We ran on that September morn
As we'd ne'er run afore ;
And bigger game we shot that morn
Than ever rolled to floor.
I broke my gun-stock with the whack
I dealt atwixt his eyes ;
And wi' that blow, as well you know,
I both lost and won a prize !
I lost the prize at the comin' show,
As Fletcher there can tell—
But I won the prize o' the widow's hand,
And, by Heaven, her heart as well.
And her bold little lad was given in,
Like a foal along wi' t' mare ;
He's at college now, and soon he'll be
A parson, fair and square.
And now hurrah for my missus,—
A toast, friends, let it be !
Her name is Gould, she's as good as gold,
She's worth the world to me."
"Aye sure, Gould, aye !" cried all the guests,
She's worth the world to thee !"

HENRY J. BARKER, M.A.

From "*Lisha Ridley, the Pitman*."

By permission of Messrs. JAREOLD & SONS.

SLINGER'S INTERVIEWING.

WHEN Protheroe, the editor of the *Society Spy*, went away for his holiday, it was very injudicious of him to leave the entire control of the paper in the hands of Slinger. He might have known that Slinger, though all very well as a subordinate,

would be sure to lose his head if exalted to the editorial chair. It was a very weak head, and easily lost, especially after a few drinks. But Slinger thought himself a genius, and here was an opportunity of proving it.

"We'll have a startling number this time," he exclaimed. And certainly that week's *Spy* bade fair to prove the most sensational ever issued. The journal made a special feature of its "Interviews," which were at that time an institution "only in its infancy." Let any one get even a whiff of popularity, and the *Spy* man was soon on the spot, making inquiries into his or her history, and serving it up afterwards, with additions and improvements. Slinger had often performed this duty, but now he resolved to break the record by inserting two interviews in one week, and writing them both himself. So, having arranged the rest of the paper, he started off the day before publication to collect material for the two remaining articles.

The first celebrity he had to call upon was Miss Gertrude Grimleigh, the strong-minded president of the Woman's Emancipation Society. She dwelt near Clapham Common, in an old and gloomy-looking house, half hidden by funeral yew and cypress trees. Slinger having at last found her out, of course she was not in, so he undertook to call again. The look of the place was so depressing that, in order to put some spirit into him, he went and had a little brandy at a saloon bar. Here he dropped upon an acquaintance—a gentleman who had a splendid scheme for making a rapid fortune, and meanwhile borrowed five shillings. He also undertook to drink, in a friendly way, any amount of liquor supplied to him gratis. An hour later Slinger returned to Gorgon Lodge, which proved as solemn and gloomy inside as out. Miss Grimleigh was herself an austere lady of no uncertain age—for she owned to half a century. She wore spectacles, grey hair, "sad-coloured" raiment, and a "look severe" that seemed to search his very soul.

In the course of half an hour Slinger had extracted much information respecting her career as a public speaker and agitator, and the origin and progress of the "Society," all of which he promised should be duly set forth in his columns. Then he thanked the lady profusely, and went back to Fleet Street. Here he met several literary gentlemen who had important affairs to discuss at the Stilton Cheese, with a running accompaniment of alcoholic beverages. Then, finding that time was getting on, Slinger jumped into a hansom and drove to No. 7, Opposition Mansions, Westminster, where he had to ascend six flights in a patent lift.

This time it was a delightful interview with that charming *danseuse* and music-hall star, Miss Lillie Flyer, whose famous "Searchlight Jig" has long been the rage of London. She received him

in an elegant boudoir, æsthetically decorated, herself robed in a Japanese tea-gown so choice as to be quite "a dream." She insisted upon his having tea out of a priceless porcelain cup, and sharing with her a box of the finest Russian cigarettes. Then she gave him a vivacious account of her professional career and future plans, and stipulated to have her portrait on the front page. When Slinger had descended by the lift, he was fairly intoxicated—with love, of course, or perhaps the tea was extra strong. At all events, his head was in a whirl. He dined at his club, and barring claret, coffee, and cognac, he might have been a teetotaler. Then he looked through what he had jotted down, and found himself rich—in information—for his pocket-book was crammed with notes.

Unfortunately, they were not arranged very systematically, and when he reached his chambers and sat down with a wet towel round his head, and a bottle of Irish by his side, he felt more fitted for high flights of poetry than for statements of sober fact. However, he set to work with great rapidity, and by one o'clock in the morning had finished both articles, and sent them to the printing-office. There was no time for editorial revision, the press was waiting, and, besides, he was so exhausted that he could only just crawl to bed, where he slept as soundly as a dormouse till noon the next day. He awoke with a splitting headache—almost like a person who had been drinking the day before—and, alarmed to find how late it was, he rose and hurried to the office. The paper had been published as usual, but there was a strange, ominous air of "something wrong" about the premises, which filled him with vague forebodings.

"If you please, sir," said the clerk, "there are two ladies who have been waiting for you ever so long."

"Show them in—one at a time," said Slinger, wearily. So the door opened, and the charming Miss Lillie Flyer entered rather abruptly—only she wasn't quite so charming now, being in a terrible state of anger and distress.

"Now, sir, what do you mean by this?" she asked, tapping vehemently a copy of the *Spy* she held in her hand.

"My dear Miss Flyer"—he began.

"Don't 'dear' me, Mr. Slinger. I've called to know how you *dared* to play such a trick upon me?"

"A trick!" he echoed, bewildered.

"Yes: you *must* have done it on purpose. But I'll be revenged. I'll bring an action against this paper!"

"Really, I don't understand."

"This description of me is nothing but cruel lies from beginning to end. You say 'she is tall, stately, but somewhat severe in aspect, with gold spectacles, and grey hair in ringlets, crowned with

a lace cap. Her dress is of sombre colour and formal cut, relieved only by a square linen collar and cuffs. As if I should go about such a guy as that! Then you say, 'this sensible lady freely admits that she was fifty-two last month.' Now, I call that unpardonable! I shall never, *never* be such a dreadful age as that—not if I live a thousand years!"

Here she wept with vexation.

Mr. Slinger grasped the situation, and the back of his chair, for he was so struck by this fearful event that he could scarcely keep his feet. He took up a copy of the ill-fated paper and tried to read, but the print swam before his eyes.

"I—I deeply regret this occurrence," he said. "I never wrote about you like that. There must be some mistake. I must have been thinking of the other lady."

"Oh, indeed! *What* other lady? And why should I suffer for it, if other people choose to be old and ugly?"

At this moment the door was suddenly flung wide open, and the majestic form of Miss Gertrude Grimleigh strode into the room. She also carried a copy of the paper, and an overwhelming rage glared from her eyes.

"Did you intend that insulting remark for me, madam?" she asked, turning upon Miss Flyer.

"I don't care if I did," was the defiant reply. "If the cap fits, wear it. Listeners never hear any good of themselves."

"Really, Miss Grimleigh," answered the unfortunate editor, "I must ask you to withdraw. I was talking important business with this lady."

"That's no business of mine," answered Miss Grimleigh. "I insist upon being heard first. I demand reparation for this scandalous series of misstatements. So I am 'the daughter of a travelling circus proprietor' am I? Such a gross libel is enough to make my revered father, the late Dean of Dulchester, turn in his grave."

"I exceedingly deplore the mistake"—began Slinger; but she went on:

"You say I received you in an æsthetic boudoir, and that I was 'attired in a bewitching tea-gown which was a perfect dream'—the absurdity of *anybody* wearing a 'dream'!—that I drank tea with you and smoked cigarettes—I, who turn faint even at the sight of tobacco."

"I really didn't mean"—gasped Slinger.

"Then you say," she proceeded, "that I was 'so kind as to give you a specimen of the new dance shortly to be introduced at the Pandora Music Hall.' Anything more scandalous I never read. Why, sir, I hold all such things in abhorrence. I never danced a step in my life!"

"I can well believe *that*!" broke in Lillie, with a malicious laugh.

"I was not addressing *you*," said Miss Grimleigh. "But the worst insult, Mr. Slinger, is yet

to come. Look at this sentence: "Miss Grimleigh is the mother of three charming children."

"I am very sorry; but it shall never occur again," protested the wretched Slinger.

"Now, sir, I am not in general weak or nervous, but on reading this cruel slander, I had a fit of hysterics, and it's a wonder I'm alive to tell the tale."

"And you said of *me*," added the other complainant, "During our interview 'her married sister called to see Miss Flyer, bringing her little boy'—*Whose* little boy?"

"I humbly confess," pleaded Slinger, "that I might have expressed myself more clearly."

"Clearly you might," returned Lillie, "and you ought to be ashamed of yourself."

"My dear ladies," said Slinger, "pray have some mercy upon me. It was quite unintentional—a mere slip of the pen, and unfortunately there was no time to rectify it. Most of the facts are truly stated, but not in the right place. I have mixed you up a little, that's all."

"I shall bring an action for libel," said Miss Grimleigh.

"I shall bring *two* actions!" cried Miss Flyer.

"And how dare you mix *me* up," demanded Miss Grimleigh, "with a person of *this* sort?"

"Who are *you* calling a person?" asked Lillie, indignantly. "Take care. I've horsewhipped people for less than that!"

"Oh, indeed! A ladylike proceeding! It's just what a young woman of *your* class would do."

Lillie grasped her sunshade threateningly.

"Your age protects you!" she cried, in deep scorn.

The agonised Slinger could bear this no longer. Seeing his two fair assailants now turning their wrath against each other, he seized the opportunity and fled, locking the door behind him. Then he glided down the back staircase that led out into Heron Court, E.C. The ladies, seeing his escape, would have given chase, but, finding themselves prisoners, they raised the alarm. By the time they had been released, Slinger was nowhere to be found. Each brought an action against the paper, and secured a thousand pounds damages. This was too much. The *Society Spy* collapsed.

Slinger was never seen again in this world. He has gone to another world—viz., the New World—i.e., the U.S.A. There is a gentleman very much like him, but known as Martin Whittle, now editing the *Rappahannock Knuckleduster*, and he never sits down to write without being armed with two revolvers.

MORAL.—Never mix your drinks—or your manuscripts.

WALTER PARKE.

By permission of the Author.

THE FORGING OF THE ANCHOR.

COME, see the *Dolphin's* anchor forged—'tis at a white heat now;
 The bellows ceased, the flames decreased, though on the forge's brow
 The little flames still fitfully play through the sable mound,
 And fitfully you still may see the grim smiths ranking round,
 All clad in leathern panoply, their broad hands only bare;
 Some rest upon their sledges here, some work the windlass there.

The windlass strains the tackle-chains, the black mound heaves below,
 And red and deep a hundred veins burst out at every thro':
 It rises, roars, sends all outright—O Vulcan, what a glow,
 'Tis blinding white, 'tis blasting bright, the high sun shines not so!

The high sun sees not on the earth such fiery fearful show;
 The roof-ribs swarth, the candent hearth, the ruddy, lurid row
 Of smiths that stand, an ardent band, like men before the foe.
 As, quivering through his fleece of flame, the sailing monster slow
 Sinks on the anvil, all about the faces fiery grow.
 "Hurrah!" they shout; "leap out, leap out!"
 Bang, bang, the sledges go!
 "Hurrah!" the jetted lightnings are hissing high and low—
 A hailing fount of fire is struck at every quashing blow,
 The leathern mail rebounds the hail, the rattling cinders strow
 The ground around; at every bound the sweltering fountains flow,
 And thick and loud the swinking crowd at every stroke pant "Ho!"

Leap out, leap out, my masters! leap out and lay on load!
 Let's forge a goodly anchor, a bower thick and broad;
 For a heart of oak is hanging on every blow, I bode,
 And I see a good ship riding, all in a perilous road,—
 The low reef roaring on her lee—the roll of ocean poured
 From stem to stern, sea after sea—the mainmast by the board—
 The bulwarks down, the rudder gone, the boats stove at the chains;
 But courage still, brave mariners, the bower yet remains,

And not an inch to fling he deigns, save what ye pitch sky high;
 Then moves his head, as though he said, "Fear nothing—here am I!"

Swing in your strokes in order; let foot and hand keep time!
 Your blows make music sweeter far than any steeple's chime.
 But while you swing your sledges, sing, and let the burden be,
 "The anchor is the anvil king, and royal craftsmen we!
 Strike in, strike in, the sparks begin to dull their rustling red;
 Our hammers ring with sharper din, our work will soon be sped;
 Our anchor soon must change his bed of fiery rich array
 For a hammock at the roaring bows, or an oozing couch of clay;
 Our anchor soon must change the lay of merry craftsmen here,
 For the 'Yo-heave-o!' and the 'Heave away!' and the sighing seamen's cheer;
 When, weighing slow, at me they go, far, far from love and home,
 And sobbing sweethearts, in a row, wail o'er the ocean foam!"

In livid and obdurate gloom he darkens down at last;
 A shapely one he is, and strong as e'er from cut was cast.
 O trusted and trustworthy guard, if thou hadst life like me,
 What pleasures would thy toils reward beneath the deep green sea!
 O deep sea-diver, who might then behold such sights as thou?
 The hoary monsters' palaces! methinks what joy 'twere now
 To go plumb plunging down amid the assembly of the whales,
 And feel the churned sea round me boil beneath their scourging tails!
 Then, deep in tangle-woods to fight the fierce sea-unicorn,
 And send him, foiled and bellowing, back, for all his ivory horn;
 To leave the subtle sworder-fish of bony-blade forlorn,
 And for the ghastly grinning shark to laugh his jaws to scorn;
 To leap down on the Kraken's back, where 'mid Norwegian isles
 He lies, a lubber anchorage for sudden shallowed miles,
 Till, snorting like an under-sea volcano, off her rolls;
 Meanwhile to swing, a buffeting the fair astonished shoals

Of his back-browsing ocean calves; or, haply in a cove,
Shell-strawn and consecrate of old to some Undine's love,
To find the long-haired mer-maidens, or, hard by icy lands,
To wrestle with the sea-serpent upon cerulean sands.

O broad-armed fisher of the deep, whose sports can equal thine?

The *Dolphin* weighs a thousand tons, that tugs thy cable line;

And night by night 'tis thy delight, thy glory day by day,

Through sable sea and breaker white, the giant gone to play.

But, shamer of our little sports! forgive the name I gave—

A fisher's joy is to destroy, thine office is to save!
O lodger in the sea-king's halls, couldst thou but understand

Whose be the white boats by thy side, and who the dripping band,

Slow swaying in the heaving wave, that round about thee bend,

With sounds like breakers in a dream blessing their ancient friend—

O, couldst thou know what heroes glide with larger steps round thee,

Thine iron side would swell with pride, thou'dst leap within the sea!

Give honour to their memories, who left the pleasant strand

To shed their blood so freely for the love of Fatherland,

Who left their chance of quiet age and grassy churchyard grave

So freely for a restless bed, amid the tossing wave.

O, though our anchor may not be all I have fondly sung,

Honour them for their memory, whose bones he goes among!

Sft SAMUEL FERGUSON.

By permission of Messrs. BLACKWOOD & SONS.

THE RACE WITH DEATH!

Into the village of Darrel's Green
A horseman rode in the glorious sheen
Of the moon as it hung all silver-bright,
Like the burnish'd shield of a warrior knight.

The hoofs rang quick on the frost-bound road—
The steed the best in the great squire's stud—
A thoroughbred—noble in action and shape,
A creature all mettle and speed and blood.
Twas well: for the errand meant life or death

For the fair young girl lying stricken there,
Away at The Chase on the Pinewood Ridge—
The Squire's one daughter, Alma Clare:

Alma Clare with the smile like dawn—

Wondrously beautiful—worshipp'd by all,

Lay ling'ring close to the mystic gates,

Within the sound of the angels' call.

"Spare whip nor spur!" the Squire had said,

And the steed, as though stung into proud disdain,

Leapt onward ere scarcely his back was cross'd,

Nor slacken'd his stride till the lad drew rein.

A hasty summons—a moment's pause—

The moonlight fell on a man's tired face,

And the young physician, with never a word,

Swung swiftly into the messenger's place.

Then on through the ghostly night he rode,

His teeth clenched hard as his iron will

Cried, "Death shall not claim you, my love, to-night!

He can do nought 'gainst my desperate skill!"

The answer came back: "Thou fool! thou fool!"—

A quivering sigh moaned down the air—

And he turn'd, with the first he'd known of fear,

To find white Death on his white steed there.

"Thou would'st ride—race against me?" the lover laughed loud—

For his passion had driven the fear from his heart—

"Mighty king, I will match me this steed against thine—

Now onward—I'm with thee—I yield thee the start!"

Then, save for the regular ring of the hoofs,

As they scarce touch'd the ground in that marvellous light,

All nature was wrapped in a slumberous hush

While Life and Death raced side by side thro' the night—

Side by side—lock'd together—for mile upon mile,

As comrades have come in old days from crusade,

These two fought their battle for Alma Clare's soul,

And bitterer struggle was never essay'd.

Now the valley is past—the a-cent is begun,

And the man's eager eyes, straining higher and higher,

See the lights of her home as they shine out like hands

That beckon him upwards with fingers of fire.

"I come, my belov'd!" and the horse hears his cry,

As the quivering pant of his breath is a proof;

But never a sign from Death's terrible steed,

Or ever a sound of the fall of his hoof.

On they sweep through the shadowy gloom of the pines

Till the rugged black ridge, rising up like a wall,

Shuts suddenly out all the radiant sky—

The stars and the moon, as with funeral pall.

Not a moment Love wavers ere breasting the steep,

Not a white does his noble brute swerve in his stride,

And the steaming sweat gathers and foams on his flanks—

All in vain, for the phantom still hangs at his side.
The summit is gain'd; there's but one awful mile
Still lying between them and sweet Alma Clare,
And within him the lover's heart throbs out the words:

"Heaven help me to save her! so youthful—so fair!"

Neck to neck, girth to girth, thro' the gates—o'er the sword,

Heads stretch'd to their utmost the horses fly on—
Ah, at last! here's the goal, but grim Death—
where is he?

Said the lover, quick turning, "The white steed is gone—

The victory's mine! Death is vanquish'd!" he cried,

And leapt from his saddle his soul full of prayer—
Nor paused he a moment, but breathlessly sped
O'er the threshold and mounted the broad muffled stair.

She would live—he would save her—'twas Heaven's decree;

Then that other glad thought set his blood all a-fire—

"Ah! surely the life that I save shall be mine—
I have come, love, to claim thee, my soul's one desire!"

He falter'd, and trembling fell back from the door,
While swift past his ears, borne on icy cold breath,
Swept the weird taunting whisper, "Thou laggard,
too late!

Thy bride is with me—she is mine—I am Death!"

CAMPBELL RAE-BROWN.

By permission of the Author.

"DER DALE OF A TOG."

JAH, dot is der dail of eine leedtle tog what you zee yonter in der class gaze. Zo! you want to hear all apoudt it? Vell, schust listiden, undt I givs you der dale of a tog.

Ve hadt an ungele—he vhas mein brodther's undt sisder's ungele alzo as vell as mein—undt he vhas very risch.

Ve all knew he vouldt leef his money in zome egcentrieg vashun, undt vonderdt how he vouldt do it.

He hadt a vafouride leedtle tog named Schakem. He vas very fondt of Schakem.

A leedtle pirdt vhisberdt to me apoudt der gontitions of mein ungele's vill, undt gif mo der sdraight tip.

Zo, vhen der dime gomes, I coes to hear der vill readt, mit a biecoe of brebaredt liffer, like der tog schtealers use, in der preasdt bogket of mein goat.

It turned oudt schust as I egshpeckdet. Der

lawyer schap readt der vill, undt dells us der oldt man's money coes in an annuidty to der barty vvhich der leedtle tog dakes der mosdt vancy to, for as long as der tog lifs; afterwards der money coes to der Togs' Home.

Vell, dot tog, he gome rightd oop to me, undt he neffer leef me, undt he dake nodt der peasdt notice of anypody else.

Zo der lawyer schap dell me to dake him home, undt traw der annuidty so long as der leedtle tog lifs.

Dot vhas all rightd, undt shust vhat I egshpeckdet, undt ve lif quidte happy for a long dimes. But alas! happiness is nodt for effer.

In apoudt den or elefen years dot boor leedtle tog gif oop der chost, undt I grys mein eyes oudt.

Den I hafs him schuffetd, undt filledt mit schprings undt glockvorgk, undt he open undt schudt his eyes, undt shake his headt, undt vag his dail, undt run apoudt der vloer schust der zame as he vas alive, undt I traws mein annuidty schust der zame too.

Vell, der dime come on, undt apoudt twelf years after boor Schakem diedt, der zegkredary of der Togs' Home gall uppon me, undt say der leedtle tog musdt be quidte oldt now—quidte dwo undt dwendty, undt he vondters how he lif so long.

"Ach! boor vellow, he is in schplentit gontidions," I say, "undt enchoys lifve like anydinks. He's fasdt aschleep now," I gondinues, schtroking him on der segret schpring. Undt he open his eyes, undt shake his headt, undt vag his dail, undt run all apoudt schust der zame as he vhas alive.

"Vonterful, vonterful!" say der zegkredary. "Who effer knew a tog lif so long as dot? Are you quidte sure he is der zame tog?"

Of gourse I dell him yes. Undt den he say he likes to hear him pargh.

I egshplain dat der boor peasdt haf a badt coldt, undt he say when he gall again negksdt year he egshpeckt to findt him pedter.

Vell, dinks I to meinzelf, afder he hadt gone, here's a pretty mess! If dot tog doesn't pargk negksdt year vhen der zegkredary galls, I lose mein annuidty.

Undt I givs vay to desbair, but mein vife she gome undt say, "Ach! you pig fool, don't you know vhat to do? Schust gedt a vphonograph undt put him mit der tog's insidte, undt gedt a life tog undt ledt him pargk indto it."

Now, dot is vhat I galls voman's vit. Undt schtraightdvays I broceetet to garry oudt her blan.

Vell, der vphonograph vas in der tog's insidte all rightd, undt I pring mein neighpour's tog Crowler to pargk indto jt.

It vorkedt schplentitly; der life tog pargked like anydings, "Pow wow wow wow!" Undt I dry to engourach him to dink he vas to fightd, so as to make der zegkredary undt der lawyer

schap feel avraidt undt run away when I turn der vhnocograph on.

"Coe it, oldt poy!" I gry. "Good tog! Gif it him! Ledt him haf it! Radts! radts! Schake 'em, den!"

Vell, after a dime der zegkredary gome again, agombanied by der lawyer schap, undt dey haf a goodt look at ter tog.

"Is his coldt any pedter?" ingwire der zegkredary.

"Jah!" I say, as I schtroke der animal undt touch der glockvorgk schpring, undt he shake his headt undt open undt schudt his eyes, undt shake his head, undt vag his dail, undt run apoudt der vloor, schust der zame as he vas alife.

"Vonterful lifely for his age," gry der zegkredary, and der lawyer schap acreedt mit him.

"Lifely!" I egchoed, "I shoudt tink he vas, too."

"But he doant parkg," said der zegkredary.

"Doant he?" I rebly, schtrocking Schakem on der headt again, and touching der vhnocograph schpring.

"Goodt tog, goodt tog!" I gondinues, to der animal, schmacking him on der kop. "Radts, radts! vetch 'em oudt, poy! Go it, Schakem."

"Pow wow wow wow!" parkg der tog, andt I schmile at der zegkredary undt say, mit der boet, "Yah, dere's lifve in der oldt tog yet."

"Vonterful, vonterful!" he rebceadt.

Ach, but I hadt forgot somedinks when I vas arranching for der meedting.

Der tog gondinuedt parkg like anydinks; but bresendtly he change his key, and proke oudt mit der vordts I hadt usedt to engorrach de odtler tog.

"Coe it, oldt poy—goodt tog! Gif it him! Ledt him haf it! Radts, radts! Schake 'em, den!"

"Mein goodtness! der tog's schpeaking!" gry der lawyer schap, mit all his hair schticking op.

"How do you accoundt for dis oecurrence?" der zegkredary ask me, as soon as he galm down.

For rebly I gif a kigk mit mein fist at der mischeraple animal—of gourse I means der tog.

Ach himmel! Ven der prude got his kigk he parkdt dwo or dree dimes more "Wow wow wow!" den vendt whirr whirr whirr! (as if he hadt been daken whirrse, mein vife saidt after-vordts) undt in an insdandt it vas all purst indto schmidtterens. Undt dot dail dere in der class caze in all dot survivedt of it.

Of gourse afder dot I haf not got some more annuidty now.

From FUNNY FOLKS.

By permission of the Proprietor.

IN THE OLD CANTEEN.

ONE more toast at parting, messmates—one more toast before I go:

Let us drink "The Grand Old Regiment," as we used to years ago,

When we lay in trench at Lucknow, and in camp at Singapore:

It is, fifteen years come Christmas since I left the fine old corps!

There be now but four among you who were messmates with me then:

Bugler Ben and Tom the tailor, Sergeant Smith and Corporal Ben:

Gone or dead—the dear old regiment!—still I love it all the same,

As a fellow loves a headstone—hallowed with his mother's name.

It was only yester-even, as I sowed and plowed the plain,

That the young squire told me, "Farmer, your old regiment's back again:

They be stationed back at Chatham;" and I left the seeds and plough—

I was home at nine this morning, here I am at Chatham now.

For I says to Sally: "Sally, it is fourteen years and more

Since my regiment sailed for India: they are back, the dear old corps!

My old captain's now the colonel: I must go and see him, lass:

I must go and meet my messmates; we must chink a kindly glass!

But my Sally sighed and answered: "You had better mind your plough!

I have told you, dear, so often, there's no need to tell you now,

That betwixt old friends and glasses, many's the sorrow we have seen:

When you meet your messmates, Charlie, keep away from the old canteen!"

No, I haven't done it, messmates; but I answered softly, "Sul,

I have always done my duty! Go's my duty—and I shall!

I'll be back betimes, my lassie, firm of foot and hale of head—

Back in time to read my Bible, and to put the boy to bed."

Ha! you laugh!—to read my Bible! Well, my hearties, where's the joke?

Night and morn I always read it, and I love the dear old Book:

I have found no friend in England kinder to me,
since my birth;
And I owe more to my Bible than to any friend on
earth.

No, I ain't a saintly fellow; I have lived a soldier's
life;
Loved my pigs and loved my bottle; been in many
a rowdy strife;
Had my flings and had my follies; and I tell you,
frank and free,
There be straighter roads to Heaven than by
marching after me!

Yet I always reads my Bible; if you wish I'll tell
you why;
First fill up your glasses, messmates; I would have
you drain them dry.
Here's the health of "The Old Regiment!" coupled
with "Our Glorious Queen!"
Now, if you would hear my story, "Attention!"
in the old canteen.

My poor mother—rest her spirit!—some few years
 afore she died—
Just when I had listed, comrades—called me kindly
to her side:
"You are going to leave me, laddie: I have little,
son, to give,
Save my blessing and my Bible—may it teach you
how to live!

"It was once your soldier-father's; it was aye your
father's pride;
Dear, he loved it in his lifetime, dear, he loved it
when he died.
Take it, with your mother's blessing; prize it for
your father's sake;
If my poor lad scorn its precepts, his old mother's
heart will break!"

Then she rose, and placed it—bless her!—in the
breast o' the coat I wore,
In the breast o' my scarlet tunic; and I sailed for
Singapore.

We were stationed there a twelvemonth; many a
gallant march we made;
Last to Lucknow, where the sun, lads, showed a
hundred in the shade.

There, the children lay a-starving, and the mothers
watched them die,
For they couldn't move from weakriess, and above
them blazed the sky:
And the Black Boys howled upon us, through the
smoke of shot and shell,
Like a swarm of swarthy devils—black deserters
out of hell!

I was standing outpost sentry; stricken by the
sickening sun;
Flat I fainted, and a comrade thought me dead,
and seized my gun;

But the bomb-shells bursting round me, shook me
from my swoon awake,
And I rose, and lo! a Sepoy sneaking round me,
like a snake!

Sneaking snake-like; then outleapt he, with a yell
—a wild halloo—
With his hatchet raised to hack me, with his
hatchet raised to hew:
And a second skulking devil slunk behind a heap
of slain,
With his rifle raised to shoot me—and I stood be-
twixt the twain!

Bang! the bullet whizzed, I heard it—pinging,
whistling to my grave,
Struck me on the breast—the Bible—the old Book
my mother gave:
And the bullet bounded off, and before his blow
was given,
Split the hatchet—felled the Sepoy! It's as true
as God's in Heaven!

You may laugh and chaff me, comrades: "Any
book had served as well;
Any book had stopped your bullet." That may be
—I cannot tell;
All I tell you is, my messmates, as I often tell the
wife,
"I have no friend like the Bible—for that old
friend saved my life!"

That's my story—true as Gospel: and I often think,
thinks I,
"If on earth it never failed me, will it fail a chap
on high?"
Surely not: leastways I'll trust it, for my trusty
friend it's been,
Good night, sergeant! good night, corporal! good
night, all, in the old canteen!

SAMUEL K. COWAN, M.A.

By permission of the Author.

WEARY WOMANKIND.

THREE weary young women of London town
Sent up their thoughts when they went to rest.
A Slattern was one, in her greasy old gown,
And a Mother another, whose kindly breast
Had soothed the screams of a fractious child,
That had beat at her heart and her brains all
day,
And a third was a Seamstress, lean and mild;
Though weary, these women had something to
say.

The Slattern she owned she was weary of Jack;
Good fellow, no doubt! but whose curious ways
Were impressed on his wife by some weals on her
back,
And by terrible bruises—well, under her stays;

And she thought on this night could she ever get
rid
Of a man who when drunk didn't care how she
fed.

She'd been true to this fellow, and did as he bid;
So the heart-broken Slatern crept into her bed.

The Mother was weary, for half of that day
She'd been bearing her burden from door unto
door;

No woman may rest on her Majesty's way,
But now her poor babe was asleep on the floor.
So she thought, this sad Mother, "Will weariness
end

By starving, or prison, or how will it be?
I haven't a penny," she sighed, "or a friend!"
Still she slept and determined the morrow to
see.

The poor little Sewing Girl, weary, of course,
With the whirr of the wheel, the machinery's
click,
She'd the strength of a mouse and the work of a
horse,

But the child was so quiet she hadn't a kick!
So she said, "It don't matter, for many, worse off,
Cannot cling to the wheel for support, and must
die."

But before she could sleep she remembered the
scoff
Of girls whose smart feathers attracted her eye.

Now, would you believe it? When all were asleep,
And the woes of all womankind seemed at an
end,

That a cry just as bitter, and sighs just as deep,
Went up to humanity seeking a friend.

For the prettiest girl that the mind can depict,
With the latest of dresses and softest of hair,
Her waist it was slender, her conduct was strict,
But beneath her blue eyes was the black of
despair.

"I am weary," she said, "on my honour it's true,
Though I've spent all the day amidst ribbons
and lace.

My sisters! your fashions are pleasant to you—
They are torture to us! 'Tis a sin, a disgrace,
That you sit at the counter all day, and you fuss;
Our task is to stand, your delight is to shop;
It's the joy of your lives, but it's death unto us—
You're hardest to please when we're ready to
drop.

"It isn't our fault that our fathers have failed
At home, at the farm, in the forge, or the mill,
But you've got us all fast, at the counter we're
nailed,
Like the dubious coin that was saved from the
till.

We are modest! Who dares to deny it? We try
To be women as good as you see we are neat;

But we stand all the day, and are ready to die,
Till we drag to our rest with our weary young
feet.

"Tis easy to scoff, but more tedious far
To smile and look merry from eight until ten,
And the school and the shop and the counter and
bar
Doesn't teach us good lessons of women or
men."

So the Slatern, the Mother, the Sewing Girl
slight,
Dropped off into dreams about toil and the
town;

But the weariest woman who slept that night
Was the fair-haired girl with the neat black
gown.

CLEMENT SCOTT.

From "Lays of a Londoner."

By permission of the Author.

MR. FEZZIWIG'S BALL.

ALTHOUGH they had but that moment left the
school behind them, they were now in the busy
thoroughfares of a city, where shadowy passengers
passed and repassed, where shadowy carts and
coaches battled for the way, and all the strife and
tumult of a real city were. It was plain enough,
by the dressing of the shops, that here it was
Christmas time again; but it was evening, and the
streets were lighted up.

The Ghost stopped at a certain warehouse door,
and asked Scrooge if he knew it.

"Know it!" said Scrooge. "Wasn't I appren-
ticed here?"

They went in. At sight of an old gentleman in
a Welsh wig, sitting behind such a high desk that
if he had been two inches taller he must have
knocked his head against the ceiling, Scrooge cried,
in great excitement:

"Why, it's old Fezziwig! Bless my heart! it's
Fezziwig alive again!"

Old Fezziwig laid down his pen and looked up at
the clock, which pointed to the hour of seven. He
rubbed his hands, adjusted his capacious waistcoat,
laughed all over himself from his shoes to his
organ of benevolence, and called out in a comfort-
able, oily, rich, fat, jovial voice:

"Yo ho, there! Ebenezer! Dick!"

Scrooge's former self, now grown a young man,
came briskly in, accompanied by his fellow-
prentice.

"Dick Wilkins, to be sure!" said Scrooge to the
Ghost. "Bless me, yes. There he is. He was
very much attached to me, was Dick. Poor Dick!
Dear, dear!"

"Yo ho, my boys!" said Fezziwig; "no more
work to-night. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas,

Rest by the bonny banks of Ure, 'mid the heather's
purple flower ;
Speak to the stalwart countryman, of the hill and
old gray tower,
And he'll tell my tale, and show the ford, and call
it "Wyvil's Hour."

SUSAN K. PHILLIPS.

By permission of the Author.

THE DONCASTER ST. LEGER.

THE sun is bright, the sky is clear,
Above the crowded course,
As the mighty moment draweth near,
Whose issue shows the horse.

The fairest of the land are here
To watch the struggle of the year ;
The dew of beauty and of mirth
Lies on the living flowers of earth,
And blushing cheek and kindling eye
Lend brightness to the sun on high :
And every corner of the north
Has poured her hardy yeomen forth ;
The dweller by the glistening rills
That sound among the Craven hills ;
The stalwart husbandman who holds
His plough upon the eastern wolds ;
The sallow, shrivelled artisan
Twisted below the height of man,
Whose limbs and life have mouldered down,
Within some foul and clouded town,
Are gathered thickly on the lea,
Or streaming far from homes to see
If Yorkshire keeps her old renown ;
Or if the dreaded Derby horse
Can sweep in triumph o'er her course ;
With the same look in every face,
The same keen feeling, they retrace
The legends of each ancient race :
Recalling Reveller in his pride,
Or Blacklock of the mighty stride,
Or listening to some grey-haired sage
Full of the dignity of age ;
How neither pace nor length would tire
Old Muley Moloch's speed and fire ;
How Hambletonian beat of yore
Such racers as are seen no more ;
How Yorkshire courses, swift as they,
Would leave this southern horse half-way,
But that the creatures of to-day
Are cast in quite a different mould
From what he recollects of old.
Clear peals the bell ; at that known sound,
Like bees, the people cluster round ;
On either side upstarting then,
One close dark wall of breathing men,
Far down as eye can stretch, is seen
Along yon vivid strip of green,

Where, keenly watched by countless eyes,
'Mid hopes, and fears, and prophesies,
Now fast, now slow, now here, now there,
With hearts of fire, and limbs of air,
Snorting and prancing, sidling by
With arching neck, and glancing eye,
In every shape of strength and grace,
The horses gather for the race ;
Soothed for a moment all they stand
Together, like a sculptured band,
Each quivering eyelid flutters thick,
Each face is flushed, each heart beats quick ;
And all around dim murmurs pass,
Like low winds moaning on the grass.
Again—the thrilling signal sound—
And off at once, with one long bound,
Into the speed of thought they leap,
Like a proud ship rushing to the deep.

A start ! a start ! they're off, by heaven,
Like a single horse, though twenty-seven,
And, 'mid the flash of silks, we scan
A Yorkshire jacket in the van ;

Hurrah ! for the bold bay mare !

I'll pawn my soul her place is there,

Unheeded to the last,

For a thousand pounds, she wins unpast—

Hurrah ! for the matchless mare !

A hundred yards have glided by

And they settle to the race,

More keen becomes each straining eye,

More terrible the pace.

Unbroken yet o'er the gravel road

Like maddening waves the troop has flowed,

But the speed begins to tell ;

And Yorkshire sees, with eye of fear,

The Southern stealing from the rear.

Ay ! mark his action well !

Behind he is, but what repose !

How steadily and clean he goes !

What latent speed his limbs disclose !

What power in every stride he shows !

They see, they feel, from man to man

The shivering thrill of terror ran,

And every soul instinctive knew

It lay between the mighty two.

The world without, the sky above,

Have glided from their straining eyes—

Future and past, and hate, and love,

The life that wanes, the friend that dies

E'en grim remorse, who sits behind

Each thought and action of the mind,

These now are nothing ; time and space

Lie in the rushing of the race ;

As, with keen shouts of hope and fear,

They watch 't in its wild career.

Still far ahead of the glittering throng,

Dashes the eager mare along,

And round the turn, and past the hill,

Sides up the Derby winner still.

The twenty-five that lay between
 Are blotted from the stirring scene,
 And the wild cries which ran so loud
 Sink by degrees throughout the crowd,
 To one deep humming, like the tremulous roar
 Of seas remote along a northern shore.

In distance dwindling to the eye,
 Right opposite the stand they lie,
 And scarcely seem to stir;
 Though an Arab sheik his wives would give
 For a single steed, that with them could live

Three hundred yards, without the spur.
 But though so indistinct and small,
 You hardly see them move at all,
 There are not wanting signs which show
 Defeat is busy as they go,
 Look how the mass, which rushed away
 As full of spirit as the day,
 So close compacted for a while,
 Is lengthening into single file.
 Now inch by inch it breaks, and wide
 And spreading gaps the line divide.
 As forward still, and far away
 Undulates on the tired array
 Gay colours, momentarily less bright,
 Fade flickering on the gazers' sight,
 Till keenest eyes can scarcely trace
 The homeward ripple of the race.
 Care sits on every lip and brow,
 "Who leads? who fails? how goes it now?"
 One shooting spark of life intense
 One drop of reluctant suspense,
 And a far rainbow-coloured light
 Trembles again upon the sight.
 Look to yon turn! Already there
 Gleams the pink and black of the fiery ware,
 And through *that*, which was but now a gap,
 Creeps on the terrible white cap.
 Half strangled in each throat, a shout
 Wrung from their fevered spirits out,
 Booms through the crowd like muffled drums,
 "His jockey moves on him. He comes!"
 Then momentarily like gusts, you heard
 "He's sixth—he's fifth—he's fourth—he's third;"
 And on, like some glancing meteor-flame,
 The stride of the Derby winner came.

And during all that anxious time,
 (Sneer as it suits you at my rhyme)
 The earnestness became sublime;
 Common and trite as is the scene,
 At once so thrilling, and so mean,
 To him who strives his heart to scan,
 And feels the brotherhood of man,
 That needs must be a mighty minute,
 When a crowd has but one soul within it.
 As some bright ship with every sail
 Obedient to the urging gale,
 Darts by vexed hulls, which side by side,

Dismasted on the raging tide,
 Are struggling onward, wild and wide,
 Thus, through the reeling field he flew,
 And near, and yet more near he drew;
 Each leap seems longer than the last,
 Now—now—the second horse is past,
 And the keen rider of the mare,
 With haggard looks of feverish care,
 Hangs forward on the speechless air,
 By tedious stillness nursing in
 The remnant of her speed to win.
 One other bound—one more—'tis done;
 Right up to her the horse has run,
 And head to head, and stride for stride,
 Newmarket's hope, and Yorkshire's pride,
 Like horses harnessed side by side,

Are struggling to the goal!
 Ride! gallant son of Ebor, ride!
 For the dear honour of the North,
 Stretch every bursting sinew forth,
 Pour out thy inmost soul,—
 And with knee, and thigh, and tightened rein,
 Lift in the mare by might and main;
 The feelings of the people reach
 What lies beyond the springs of speech,
 So that there rises up no sound
 From the wild human life around;
 One spirit flashes from each eye,
 One impulse lifts each heart throat high,
 One short and panting silence broods,
 O'er the wildly-working multitudes,
 As on the struggling coursers press,
 So deep the eager silentness,
 That underneath their feet the turf
 Seems shaken, like the eddying surf,
 When it tastes the rushing gale,
 And the singing fall of the heavy whips,
 Which tear the flesh away in strips,

As the tempest tears the sail,
 On the throbbing heart and quivering ear,
 Strike vividly distinct, and near.
 But mark what an arrowy rush is there,
 "He's beat! he's beat!"—by heaven, the mare!
 Just on the post, her spirit rare
 When Hope herself might well despair;
 When Time had not a breath to spare;
 With bird-like dash shoots clean away,
 And by half a length has gained the day.
 Then how to life that silence wakes!
 Ten thousand hats thrown up on high
 Send darkness to the echoing sky,
 And like the crash of hill-pent lakes,
 Outbursting from their deepest fountains,
 Among the rent and reeling mountains,
 At once from thirty thousand throats
 Rushes the Yorkshire roar,
 And the name of their northern winner floats
 A league from the course, and more.

SIR F. HASTINGS DOYLE.

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THE PROMPTER'S STORY.

"WHAT'S the story about?"

"It's about a deceased friend of mine, whose terrible 're-appearance' after his late fatal indisposition" overclouded a portion of my chequered life."

This was said in answer to Parklemore, our "heavy lead," who had gravely questioned my ability to cap the story he had just been retailing to our little company in the green-room. I think my poetical words rather knocked him over, for he only said "Oh!" Just listen to me for a few minutes, and I'll tell it to you exactly as I told it to them.

Some years since, when I was with old Grimston's company, and pretty well used to all lines of business; throwing the real legitimate, *i.e.*, the prompting part in, of course, I came across, while we were travelling, one of the strangest characters which I ever encountered. Where Bancalari came from, what he had been, or what he was likely to be, were ordinary and not unnatural questions amongst us, from the "first tragedy" downwards. It was reserved for me, having always a heart ready to respond to the outcry of suffering or oppressed humanity (from "Ursula the Outdone," five acts), to dive into Bancalari's secret. In our company he was strictly a *nobody*. He was "cast" for dead soldiers, speechless guests, even "outside shouts"; but never for a "speaking part," though such was his lowest ambition. Personally, I am above this; I have spoken some of the finest lines in the whole repertory of the Drama—for others!

It's no joke, though, if you're ambitious, to be kept under; smouldering, so to speak, don't suit would-be inflammatory stars; and Bancalari drooped, visibly drooped. To me alone did that broken creature confide his woes. He felt within him (it was about all he *did* feel, for he spurned food, as it were), a "divine *hiatus*," a craving to excel in the—what I may call—sepulchral parts in Shakespeare's plays. But it was not to be. The iron heel of tyranny was crushed upon his brow (I quote from "Dulacho the Dauntless"), the man sank; when our company left Pembury, Bancalari declined to follow our fortunes. We haven't made them yet, by the way. He remained. But why? A chance opened for him, that's why. A weak-minded manager had taken the Theatre Royal, Pembury, for six months certain. Here was Bancalari, *residuum* of a stock company of renown. Distinctly his chance. We were glad to hear of this, and we went our ways to the north, and Bancalari stopped at Pembury. Stopped altogether.

It seems that the poor chap had made up his mind to come out strong, and for that purpose had studied every principal part in the Shakespearean and legitimate drama. Judge of my—

everybody's—horror to read in the *Banffshire Banner* the ghastly tidings that Bancalari had hung himself (from a gas batten) two days after the new company had arrived at Pembury. Never mind about the details. The facts were, professionally, these: Bancalari had gained the lofty summit of his ambition. Ignorant of his speechless position in *our* company, the manager of the "Meteorite Mimmers" had cast him for no less a character than Guildenstern in "Hamlet"; and Bancalari felt his importance to the quick. Unhappily, a billsticker let out on Bancalari's professional status, and the part was taken from him; officially, the character assigned to him was one of the bearers of Ophelia's remains. The generally grave atmosphere of "Hamlet" was too much for this bursting soul; and throwing up the part Nature had written for him, he left the theatre and the world for ever. Poor Bancalari!

Some two years afterwards, I, with a very different *troupe*, was back at Pembury for a fortnight's engagement. Terms were good, and both Screwer and McHowler were with us, so that business was pretty sure. Odd to say, both low comedy and high tragedy stars objected to the engagement the very first night, and there was a regular shindy in the manager's room after the performance. The cause soon eked out. It appeared that when Screwer, made up for the farce, went into the Green Room, and, as he was accustomed to do, began to "mug" in the cheval-glass, a gloomy, pale-faced, seedy-looking personage suddenly showed himself behind the distinguished comedian, and, with an expression of contempt beyond even theatrical hitherto experience, observed, "Bad! low! not a bit like! could do better myself!" and incontinently left the apartment.

Screwer never played so badly in his life, and never swore so successfully; but McHowler's time had to come. While he was gesticulating before the glass, the apparition returned.

"Deuced bad!" said the Ghost. "Infernally bad! Bow wow! not a bit like! not a *little* bit! You play Hamlet! Go home! and *once* more the figure vanished. There was "fits" for the manager next day, for it turned out that every one of the visiting company who had gone into the Green Room had been similarly insulted.

Of course, it all came to my ears, and somehow every one soon knew of this outrage, and a watch was kept; but next night the same trouble ensued. The "starring" lady was sent into hysterics by what folks began to call "the Ghost in the Green Room," and really things were getting quite unpleasant when it occurred to me to go and look the case up *myself*. I transferred the book to the under-carpenter, who knew the "pulls," if nothing else, and betook myself to the little Green Room. It was empty, for everybody

was on in the last act of the drama, and I stared about. Suddenly I heard a sigh, and on looking to the door, I saw Bancalari standing just inside the room, where his figure was reflected in the big glass. "James!" I cried, "James Banc—" I couldn't get another word out. I was downright petrified.

"Yes, Flagman," said Bancalari's ghost, in tones which our greatest living tragedian cannot hope to rival. "Yes, I am, or was, Bancalari!"

I trembled like an aspen, but remembered Hamlet.

"Why do you trouble us? What do you want?" I stammered out.

"I want a part," said the Ghost. "I think I can play one now."

"Now, James?" I faltered. "Now? Why Guildenstern—?"

"Away with your Guildensterns! I play the Ghost in 'Hamlet' to-morrow night, or farewell to the fortunes of this theatre. Here I suffered, here I died. Here, too, I will revive the Shakespearian drama! Which is it to be?" and the spectre frowned remorseless. The tomb had produced in Bancalari that haughty indifference to everybody's feelings or convenience which marks, and will ever mark, the successful actor when living.

"James," I said, "we were ever on good terms whilst we were in that little company, and it would go to my heart to deny you a trifle such as you demand; but how is it to be done? I confess you are better qualified for the part you have so judiciously selected than any one I could name. But how is it to be done?"

At this moment the call-boy entered the room, and before a word could pass between any of us the apparition had disappeared. I seemed to hear, however, a sort of sad whispering sound in the air, like the word "Remember!" and I shuddered. Next day I made a singular effort to accomplish my poor old friend's wish. I got up a little quarrel between our two leading men on the subject of tragedy acting, and the inevitable result was that the manager was obliged to put up "Hamlet." The rehearsals were brief, for we were all well up in the legitimate; but, odd to say, at the last "call," our gentleman (old man) who played the Ghost of Hamlet's father, was taken suddenly ill. This, I need not tell you, was by private arrangement with me. The manager was furious; so was the Hamlet. What was to be done? Would they leave it to me to find a substitute? Could it be managed? I answered for it, it *could*. My friend, I told them, of the name of James Banks, would essay the part. "Will he look it!" was the most unnatural question of the management. "He will," said I, shivering, "remarkable!"

I went into the town; my spirits were low. I entered a retired hotel (where there was a bar), and while supporting worried nature against what was to happen that night, who should come in but

Mr. Screwer, the dramatic critic of the *Pembury Times*. The idea occurred to me that that gentleman should be present and place on record his opinions on the new "appearance." After the second glass he yielded to my request, and would take the trouble to be at the theatre, though he confessed to me that our leading gentleman's Hamlet injured his health severely, as much on its own account as because of the necessity for stimulants which it occasioned.

Nevertheless he would come.

So did the evening, and McHowler was in a pretty way with me. There had been no signs of anybody to play the Ghost, and I was regularly denounced by the lot. "Mark my words," I said, stubbornly, "He'll be on the spot for his cue."

The curtain rose, and Francisco, Bernardo, and Marcellus, and Horatio were leading up to the entrance of the late King, when I noticed a blue light in the first wing, and there, looking as no ghost ever looked before, stood James Bancalari! The next moment he was on the stage.

* * * * *

To tell you how that play of "Hamlet" went that night is beyond me. The alarm of Hamlet at sight of his father's spirit was about the best thing McHowler ever did, and the Queen's fainting fit in Act iii., scene 4, was very like real. I went hastily to the Green-room. James Bancalari was there, lurid, but self-satisfied. "There will be a notice of this performance to-morrow," he said, smiling; "let what is said of me be written on my tomb and I shall rest in peace." I agreed gladly, for I was cold all down my spine, I tell you.

The company all met next morning on the stage to discuss the new addition to the ranks. The *Pembury Times* was brought in. McHowler seized it, and read aloud as follows:—

"There was little to call for attention or notice last evening at our pretty little temple of the Drama, seeing that the well-worn tragedy of "Hamlet," with McHowler in the part of the melancholy Prince, occupied the boards, and with the merits of both our readers are familiar. The company sustained their respective rôles with much effect. We must, however, take exception to the performer who essayed to play the Ghost. Neither by *physique* nor any other qualification was he fitted for the character—in fact, he was not in the least our notion of a Ghost, and we must chronicle what we believe to be a first appearance as a complete failure."

There was a dismal wail in the air close to my ear and a sort of rushing sound, and then silence fell upon us.

"Poor fellow!" was our one remark.

This was the first and last appearance of James Bancalari.

His ghost was never seen again.

ROBERT REECE

By permission of the Author.

BEHIND TIME.

"MORE coal, Bill!" he said, and he held his watch to the light of the glowing fire;

"We are now an hour and a half behind time, and I know that my four months' wife will be waiting for me at the doorway just now, with never a wish to tire;

But she soon will get used to this sort of thing in an engine-driver's life."

He open'd the furnace door as he spoke, & hile I, turning with shovel in hand,

Knock'd the fuel into the greedy flame, that was tossing and writhing about,

Leaping up from its prison, as if in a wiath it had not the power to command,

Shooting narrow pathways of sudden light through the inky darkness without.

Then I turn'd to my place, and as onward we clank'd, I sang to myself a snatch

Of a song, to keep time to the grinding wheel (my voice was as rough as its own);

While Harry cried over, from time to time, as he stole a look at his watch,

"Making up for our little delays now, Bill, we shall soon catch the lights of the town."

A steady fellow was Harry, my mate, with a temper like that of a child;

Loved by all on the line—"Keep time like Harry!" the guards used to say.

What a marriage was that of his when it came, and how we stokers went wild

To deck our engines with ivy and flowers in honour of such a day!

A nice happy maiden he'd got for a wife, but a little timid, poor thing—

Never could rest when her husband was late, our "pitch-ins" were getting so rife;

And this would make Harry cry over to me, as we thundered with rush and swing,

"Always like to run sharp to time for the sake of my little wife."

We were now dashing along at a headlong speed, like the sweep of a winter wind,

When a head-light in front made me step to his side and cry, with my mouth to his ear—

"Joe Smith coming on with the midnight goods—he, too, is an hour behind;

He should have been safe through Hinchley cutting, instead of passing us here."

On came the train; but ere we had reached in . passing the middle part,

A heavy beam in one of the trucks, that had jolted loose from its place,

Crash'd through the storm-board, swift as a bolt, striking Harry full in the heart,

And sent him into the tender, with death lying white on his manly face.

With a cry of horror I knelt by his side, and lifting a little his head,

I saw his lips move, as if wishing to speak, but the words were lost in a moan.

Harry! He open'd his eyes for a moment, then lifting his finger, said—

"O Bill, my wife—behind time;" and I was left on the engine alone.

My God! what a journey was that through the night, with the pall-like darkness before,

And behind me the dead form of my mate, muffled up, looking ghastly, rigid, and dumb;

And ever on either side as I turn'd, a face at a half-shut door,

Peering into the street, to list to the sound of footsteps that never would come.

How that frail slight wife bore the terrible death of the one she had loved so well

I know not; the horrors of that one night with the dead was enough to bear;

And the guardsmen who bore the sad burden home had not language left them to tell

Of the awful depths to which sorrow will reach when led by a woman's despair.

Ah! years have gone by since then, but still, when I hear the guards say, "Behind time,"

Like a flash I go back to that hour in the night, mark'd red in my life's return sheet;

And again in my terror I kneel by Harry, struck down in his manly prime,

While the four months' wife stood waiting to hear the wish'd-for sound of his feet.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

By permission of the Author.

A HAPPY HUSBAND.

INDIFFERENT, they call me, because I allow to my wife,

Unfettered, unquestioned, the happy free play of her life?

Do they doubt that I love her because my love builds not a cage

To prison her soul in its youth, so to hasten its age?

They may see her as mother and wife, but they know not herself,

The girl in the woman, with just a bright dash of the elf—

The heart of the girl that is full of the laughter of love,

The heart of the woman that's one with the angels above,

The heart of the angel that brings us God's pity to earth,

The heart of the fairy bewitching poor mortals for mirth,

The heart of the mother that sings its child-love
to the sun,
The heart of the child in the heart of the mother
all one,
And all these combined in the beautiful heart of
my wife.
How then to deny her the joyous free play of her
life?
They smile—how I know them—and sneer out
“Poor fellow, he's blind,”
Because I see clear, and have faith in a pure
woman's mind.
I know her so sure in her goodness, no shadow of
harm
Could fall on her life, although every man valued
her charm.
It were blind not to see that a woman who gladdens
one life
May yet gladden others although she be true as a
wife;
It were blind not to see that the gladness of life
never mars
The soul of a woman whose smiles are as pure as
the stars.
Yes, blind, we are all of us blind, we the husbands
of wives,
When we make their possession the end of romance
as two lives;
We most of us make the mistake, and, repenting,
discover
A husband must seldom play husband if still he'd
be lover.
But she has no doubt of my loving, no fear of her
power
To hold all my heart all my life, as she holds for
an hour
A dozen successive adorers who flatter her ear,
And set her heart laughing that I must laugh too
when I hear.
We two understand how to live married life at its
best,
Amused at its comedy, laughing duets at each jest;
Yet lacking no heart for the pathos, when, lights
burning low,
Our hands clasp each other, and love tells us more
than we know.
And so let them say what they will, we can face
all the years,
With the laughter of life in our hearts, little fear-
ing the tears.

MALCOLM C. SALAMAN.

By permission of the Author.

MY FIRST AND LAST APPEARANCE.

How I ever came to do it I don't know. I was not
a theatrical man. I had never acted a part in my
life, except once at a charade when I was a little
boy, and then my elder brother smacked my head
in the passage afterwards because I let out the

word with appalling significance immediately I
came on. As far as I have anything like an
impression on the subject, I think it was all
owing to Duncan. If it was not, I have done him
a wrong of tall dimensions, inasmuch as I have
cut him persistently ever since it occurred seven
years ago.

If I am not dreaming, Duncan called on me on
the day of the performance, and said, in about two
breaths and a half, that it was for the benefit of a
charity, and somebody could not play the small part
of Giuseppe Diavolo at the last moment because
his mother was ill, and would I do it, and it was
as easy as possible, and I should only be on the
stage a few minutes; and the theatre was in Bays-
water, and would I start, please, not later than a
quarter-past six, and he was sure I could not refuse;
and it was very kind of me to say I would do it (I
had not said anything of the kind); and there was
the book with the part all marked, and he was very
sorry he could not stop, but he had to go and see
the costumier, who had only sent him one grey
whisker instead of two to play an old man's part
in; and, as he said before, it really was very good-
natured indeed, and *au revoir*—and then I found
myself alone with the book.

If I am not still dreaming, I rushed out to call
Duncan back; but by the time I got to the top
of the stairs, the tails of his coat were just whisking
out of the door, and he either would not or could
not hear my despairing shout.

I believe also, that when I came back into my room
again, I took the book up and began to learn my
part. I shall always declare to the end of my life
—and thumbscrews won't make me depart from
the statement—that at 5 P.M. I knew every single
word of it. But I confess myself totally at a loss to
account for the phenomenon that at 5.30 I didn't
know it quite so well; that at 6, a distinct coolness
had sprang up between me and it; and that at
6.15, when I had been requested to start for the
scene of action, we were complete strangers to each
other.

I started mechanically, book in hand, and I
hailed a cab. My composure of mind was not
augmented by the circumstance that the driver
confounded the elegant little bijou theatre to which
he was directed to take me, first with a low music-
hall, and then with a lower music-hall, and that he
then, as it were, suddenly repenting, drove me in
triumph up to the front entrance of a dissenting
chapel. We ultimately arrived at my real destina-
tion, but the devious route by which I had come
and the stoppages which had occurred on the way,
had consumed so much time, that the performance
was about to begin; and all hope of my having a
little quiet “study” at my part had vanished.

I think, but I am not sure, that I expected,
when I got to the door, to see Duncan there in
the act of putting on his whiskers. If I did, I
was doomed to disappointment, for he was nowhere

visible. This being so, I thought I had better ask for the "green-room," and I did so of a man who was standing at the door, in a tone which might naturally accompany an inquiry for the condemned cell.

"Green-room, sir? bless yer, there ain't no green-room 'ere; but the dressin'-rooms is hunder the stage. You've come to the wrong hentrance haltogether, but if you go along that there passidge, and hopen that there door at the hend of it, and go down the stairs (which the roof being low, and the timbers sticking hout, you'll wery, likely 't your 'ed as you go), you'll find another door as leads into another passidge, and the dressin'-rooms leads hout of that."

This complicated and not, strictly speaking, cheerful direction, is impressed on my memory with exactness, because I *did* hit my head against a protruding timber as I went down the stairs to which the man had alluded. And as I have the scar now, I am led to think that this part of the evening, at all events, is not a creature of my imagination.

Giddy with the blow, I found myself, somehow, in the passage out of which the various dressing-rooms led, and the questions which I had to solve were, which dressing-room was intended for me, how I was going to be dressed, and who was going to dress me? I gently tried a door, with the words "Dressing-room" written over it. It was locked, and a shrill treble scream from within gave me reason to suppose that if it had not been locked the consequences might have been embarrassing.

I fled on tiptoe and was getting desperate, when a door lower down opened a little way, and an anxious head was thrust out. It was so disguised with paint, an unearthly wig, and two venerable grey whiskers, that I should not, I think, have recognised its owner but for the fact of his speaking to me in the unmistakable tones of Duncan.

"My dear fellow, this is your room. I told the man at the stage-door to show it to you. For mercy's sake, make haste; you've got to be dressed, and you come on quite early in the first act. Come along, pray."

I went along, pray, and the next thing I remember is that I found myself dressed up as a brigand, with a long cloak thrown loosely over me, as to which I can recall that whenever I walked I tripped up in it, and fell forwards; and whenever I stood still, I caught my heels in it, and fell backwards. After I had done this impartially, about six times each way, I thought it advisable to tuck it up. I am inclined now to believe that I must then have looked rather more like an elderly lady going over a crossing on a wet day than a blood-thirsty brigand.

I was scarcely tucked up when Duncan, who had gone upstairs, and told me to wait in the dressing-room till he called me, came rushing down.

"Come up instantly, you'll be on in a minute.

Don't forget the pistols, and the sword, and the rifle, and the dagger."

I had put those weapons all down while arranging the cloak to my satisfaction, and I now seized them hastily, and put the dagger through my belt on one side, with the handle downwards, and the pistols on the other side with the barrels pointing upwards, so that if they had been loaded, and had gone off, they must infallibly have blown my head off; and I clung to the sword in one hand, and to some part, but I really don't know what part, of the gun in the other hand, and ran after Duncan. The moment I got to the top of the stairs, the dagger began to wriggle, and the weight of the handle being at the wrong end, it fell out of the scabbard, that had got mixed up with the belt, and I could not unfasten it. I had to make dabs at it with the dagger, which resulted in my receiving six small flesh wounds, and then throwing the dagger away. I was in the very act of doing so when my turn came to go on.

I am prepared to state on oath that from the time of my reaching the theatre until that moment, no subject had been more distant from my mind than my part. Owing to my lateness, the succession of events had been so rapid and startling that I had not had one instant for reflection of any kind, and had given myself up to the situation like a straw in a whirlwind.

Accordingly, when Duncan gave me a push and whispered, "Now then, fire away, flourish your gun, and say: 'Ha, ha! whom have we here?'" I was as much astonished at the moment as if he had asked me to assassinate his mother.

The scene must, I think, have been a forest. My reason for thinking so is, that there were two or three evergreens, and a general appearance of green paint about; and that two ladies, an old one and a young one, were wandering up and down, and trying not to see me (which was a difficult matter, as the size of the stage would not allow of my being more than three yards off them), and that they mentioned at intervals that the carriage had broken down, and they feared they had lost the path, and they sincerely trusted that Heaven would not, in that very unpleasant dilemma, desert them.

I have sometimes since in a quiet hour speculated in my mind as to whether, in happier circumstances, I might have gone so far as to deliver myself of the ridiculous observation, "Ha, ha! whom have we here?" I almost think I should have got to it in time; I seem even to recall a desperate effort to clear my mind, and be equal to the occasion; but at the critical moment, when my lips were about to move, and say something, it might have been, "Ha, ha! whom have we here?" or it might not; I won't pledge myself on the point—I dropped a pistol. I stooped down instinctively to pick up the pistol, and down went the gun, and then the other pistol, and then the sword,

and then the pistol I had just picked up; and the more agonised I grew, and the more desperately I struggled, the more hopeless I found it to retain all my weapons at one and the same moment. If I got a firm hold of the pistol, the gun was prostrate, and the sword between my legs; if I secured the sword and one pistol, the other pistol rolled about the stage like a nine-pin, and the gun fell with a thud on my toe. The violence of my exertions caused the arrangement by which I had fastened up my cloak to give way, and just as I had at last fairly got hold of sword, gun and pistols, and was clutching them in my arms like a person nursing several babies at once, down went that abominable garment to its full length, and the next moment I had tripped up, and was rolling about the stage on my back with the implements of war on the top of me, clutched in my arms as before, and hurting most dreadfully.

I know that Duncan has denied it since, but I am positively certain that exactly at that moment he observed, in a most unkind tone of voice from the side wings—it is painful to me to repeat his coarse language, but I must do it—he observed, "Come off, you ass."

I was so convinced of it at the time, and so full of indignation, that I sat up (I couldn't stand), forgetful of audience and of everything but my wrongs, and threw first one pistol and then another at the place from which Duncan's voice came. The first broke a plate-glass window, and the other hit a stage carpenter on the head.

The discharge of these missiles was followed by an instant burning desire for precipitate flight. I got up like lightning (I managed it that time), made for the wings, tore off my cloak, went upstairs, downstairs, and along passages as if pursued by all the furies; reached the stage-door, rushed past the man who was there, opened it, and made for home in a costume consisting of buff-coloured boots up to the thighs, a leather belt about two feet wide, with the scabbard of the dagger still thrust into it wrong side up, and a crimson coat and trousers. I must add that I was also garished with a gigantic pair of hostile eyebrows, a large black beard, and a shaggy wig. I had been originally finished off with a conically shaped hat, but that must have come off somewhere, for I certainly had nothing on my head, except the wig, when I started from the theatre. My impression is, that it fell off and rolled about like a pudding-basin in distress when I tumbled down.

How I ever got through the streets I know not. At all events, I am persuaded that if I had had to be let in at my lodgings by the servant, I should have been responsible for her sudden death from fright. But luckily I had, from some instinctive impulse, transferred my latch-key, notwithstanding the haste in which I had dressed, to the pocket of my theatrical costume, and I was able to let myself in.

I sent back the costume in a hamper next day anonymously. No one ever sent me back my own clothes, and for the wealth of the Indies I couldn't have gone to the theatre to claim them.

I have stated here what I believe to have been facts that actually occurred. There is only one thing which makes me doubt whether my whole story is not based on some extraordinary hallucination. It is this—that in a theatrical magazine, which I took up accidentally soon after the date on which I suppose these events to have happened, there was contained a criticism on the performance in which I had, as I thought, taken part in the character of Giuseppe Diavolo, and in that criticism appeared the following paragraph:—

"The play was a melodrama of the heaviest type, and it was relieved only from intolerable dullness by the irresistibly droll acting of the gentleman who played the part of a comic brigand named Giuseppe Diavolo. This actor contrived, out of slender materials of pure pantomimic action, to provoke the most side-splitting laughter we ever remember to have heard in a theatre, and his sudden and somewhat unexplained disappearance left a blank which was not supplied during the remainder of the evening."

EDWARD F. TURNER.

From "T. Leaves," by permission of the Author,
and Messrs. SMITH, ELDER & CO.

THE TROOPER'S DEFENCE.

Do I plead guilty to it? Yea, I do;
For I have never lied, and shall not now;
But give me a dog's leave to say a word
Touching what happened, and the why and how.
The night-guard went their round that night at
one;
My post was in the lower dungeon range,
Down level with the moat, all slime and ooze
And damp; but there, 'tis fit we change and
change,
We sentinels. Besides, 'twas in a sort
The place of honour, or of trust, we'll say;
For in the cell there with the mortised door
The young boy-lord, guilty of treason, lay.
Well, with my partisan I'd tramped an hour
Down in the dark there—just a lantern hung
By the wet wall—when close at hand I heard
My own name spoken by a woman's tongue.
My hair was like to lift my morion up,
For the keep's haunted; but I turned, to see
A woman like a ghost—face white, all white,
Ready to drop, and not a yard from me.
How she had come there God in heaven knows.
However, long before my tongue I'd found,
She tore out of her hair the white pearls, big
As pigeons' eggs, then dropt upon the ground.

"One word!" she said, "only one word with him;
He dies to-morrow! See, my pearls I give,
My bracelets too,"—she slipped them from her arms—
"One word, and I will bless you while I live!"

"Your face is stern. O, but one word, one word!"
With my big hand I set her on her feet;
But she clung to me, would not be thrust off,
Still pleading in a bird's voice, soft and sweet.

"Only one word with him!" that was her plea;
One word; he would be dead at break of day!
She wept till all her pretty face was wet,
And my heart melted! yea, she had her way.

They spoke together. Did I hear? Not I;
Best ask me if I took her bribes. Well, there,
You know the rest—know how yon Judas-spy,
Yon starveling cur, crawled down the winding
stair;

And how he caught the bird fast in the cage,
And made report of me with eager breath
For breach of duty. Right; it was a breach,
And that means, in our soldier-fashion, death!

Well, I can face it; only give me leave
To slit the weesand of yon craven hound,
Yon Judas-spy there, and I'd fall content;
Aye, as I'd fall to sleep upon the ground.

WILLIAM SAWYER.

By permission of Messrs. LONGMANS & Co.

• THE MAN WITH ONE HAIR.

HE was not bald, for, on his shining cranium
Remained one hair, its colour pink geranium.
Oh! how he idolised that single hair
That, last of loved ones, grew luxuriant there!
He counted it each morning, fondly viewed it
This way and that way; carefully shampooed it;
Combed it and brushed it, scented it and oiled it,
Dared scarce to put his hat on, lest he spoiled it.
In evening dress, arrayed for swell society,
He'd part it in the middle for variety.
Often he'd curl it, train it on his brow
In navy fashion, as our middies now.
Omitting nothing, with devoted care
He'd pet his hirsute pride, his single hair!
But, sad to say (ah! heavy was the blow!)
There came a day, a day of direst woe.
'Twas in his soup it fell; he quick espied it;
He rescued it, and on his napkin dried it!
His only hair, his pet, his flowing tress.
Chill was his forehead, deep his heart's distress.
"I'm bald at last!" he cried in bitter grief;
"My only hair has fallen like a leaf!
What! ho! A taxidermist!" shouted he;
"I'll have it stuffed, for all the world to see!"

(*And so he did.*)

ROBERT GANTHONY.

From *PICK-ME-UP*,

By permission of the Proprietors.

TOLD ON THE FIRE STATION.

"WONDERFUL, spick and span, you call it, sir?"
Well, so it is. You see most on us ha' been sailors,
and we like to keep things trim and tant. Find it
lonely here o' night? Well, if you come to that,
I'd sooner be a shipboard; for there's something
of comfort in the endless song of the restless sea!
More excitement in this life? Well, yea; we
turned out three times last night. But often I
long to face the biting gale, and feel the fresh
spray wipe my face. It's black work, fighting
with fire, master, and there's not one on us but 'ud
sooner *drown* than *burn* any day. You think us
heroes, sir?—the greatest, eh? Greater than
soldiers? Ah! you wouldn't say that if yer was
a woman. I'm not a fair judge to speak o' soldiers.
I never knew much of 'em, only one—and him—
well, I 'ud a' liked to ha' killed him. Did I? No!
I saved the lubber's life, and—well, never mind
the rest of the remark, sir. Story? Romance
in my life? Ha! I dunno. I suppose there's
romance in most lives that springs from a beating
heart—though I've seen some as a' got no more
feeling than a marlinspike. Like to hear my yarn?
Well, I dunno! I'd sooner one o' my mates told
it than me. It don't sound well off my tongue
somehow, and yet sometimes, when I sit here all
alone, waiting for that still alarm to sound, the
thoughts of it come upon me, and I feel I could
burst for want of some 'un to tell it to. Tell you,
sir? Well, I can tell it short—but I mayn't be
able to finish—for if that bell sounds, the tale
stops—sharp, like my life will! One o' these times,
when my foot slips, or a burning beam gives way.
Think about death? What's a man got to live for
but for *duy*! That done, the sooner he's laid by
the better; there's too much room already for
lubbers and loafers, I'm thinking. Nothing so
noble as to live a great life? Well, I don't know
about a *great* life; but we sailors and fire lads soon
come to know that duty's *got to be done*, and it's
always alongside. Right to be happy, you say?
Well, I dunno; seems to me, if you set your heart
on a thing it's bound to go wrong, as my story 'ull
show—and if you idle and loaf, you do harm to
others that can never be remedied, as my bit o'
yarn 'ull prove also.

"You must know, governor, when I came off
from my last voyage I'd saved a bit o' money, and
I thought of settling down. Such being in my
thoughts, I fell fathoms deep in love wi' a pretty
lass, who was a distant relation o' one of my mates.
It's a common thing for people to laugh at a sailor-
lad's love; but I never knew a tar as was worth
his salt that wasn't full of tenderness and unselfish-
ness. My Kate, as she was then, was as fine and
bright-eyed a lass as you'd wish to see, and she
used to work in a big drapery store down the West
End. Well, I took to her wonderful, and I was
a bit finer-looking chap then than I am now, as I

was fresh-coloured and hadn't had my hair singed away. And she seemed inclined to be fond o' me, and I used to take her out, and felt very happy. But after a little while she got very feverish and cold, and seemed as if she didn't care whether she pleased me or not; and then she began to make uncomplimentary remarks about my costume—for I used to wear my sailor clothes then. Well, I pondered this over a good deal, and I found out she was going out wi' another chap. He was a non-commissioned officer in the Guards, and a fine-looking chap enough in his regimentals—his legs were a bit long to weather a gale o' wind in, and what was genuine o' his chest wasn't as broad as a man's ought to be for him to pull his own weight up by his arms—or to swim through a 'choppy' sea; but he had a big moustache, nicely greased hair, and a sort of womanish look in his eyes—all this, with a red coat and gold lace, makes the sort o' man a pretty girl seems to like best. Well, I saw how it was, and I came to an understanding with Kate. 'It must be him or me, once for all,' I said. She chose him. Well, sir, that girl had a sort o' way with her that had wound itself round my heart in a way I couldn't get rid of. I dreamt of her o' nights—I always seemed to see her eyes, even in broad daylight. I felt if I didn't get something to do I should go on the drink or something worse. I didn't want to sign on a strange ship, so I joined the Firemen, and glad they were to have me; for though I say it myself, I'm active and strong—if I can't make pretty lying speeches, as *he* could. I soon got to like my new life: but I've never been the man I was before I loved her. It was near two years before I saw him again. We were called out to a big fire down Chelsea way. It was a tall house, and let out in flats. I could see by the glare and the way the glass kept shivering out o' the windows that the flames was raging inside, the big main staircase was alight, where the draught was fiercest. I sprang up one escape, and had nearly reached the top when a window was dashed out almost in my face, and a young man jumped on the sill. 'Just lift me into the shoot,' he says, 'and go on up; there's a man in the room above, asleep, I think: you can't get up by the stairs; they're all ablaze.' I puts him right to go down, and then I springs up to the next window, but the 'scape fell short; but I could reach a cornice that run under the window, and I pulled myself up on to it, broke in the casement, and jumped into the room. The glare was awful. Across the bed was the form of a man—dressed—as if he he'd flung himself on to the bed too tipsy to take his clothes off. I grabbed hold of him, shouted, and pulled him up to look in his face. *Good God! it was the man who'd taken from me the woman I loved!* Outside I heard the roar of the flames as they licked up the staircase; already the door of the room was alight. For a minute I longed to fling his body into that sea of fire. He seemed senseless. But I knew my duty

was to *save* life. I dragged him to the window for air; he came to. In his drunken sleep he had known nothing. 'Is the place alight?' he said stupidly. I gripped him by the shoulders, and shook him roughly. I glared into his eyes. 'Rouse yourself!' I shouted. 'What about Kate Hardy, you cur?' He was sobered. He knew me; and I saw a greater terror come into his eyes than the glare of the fire had brought there. 'Thank your lucky stars, you villain, that you've come face to face with me when I'm on duty.' I helped him on to the cornice. He trembled! His pluck was all right in the ranks, I daresay, to the sound of the trumpet and drum; but single-handed he faced death poorly. In almost whining tones he said, 'I can't reach the escape!' 'You'll have to go down head first,' I replied. 'Trust to me. Let me get hold firm of your ankles; get your arms in the shoot; keep your head well between them—when I let you go, spread your legs wide against the canvas, and you'll go down easy.' The room was now well alight. It was plain the house must be gutted, and water was being poured on from all sides. I could do no more there, so I dropped on to the ladder, and was soon in the street. *He* was there safe, but looking scared and shaken. I pulled him aside a moment, and hissed in his ear: 'Never let me meet you again, for if I do I might kill you for ruining my life!' Ah! the alarm! Good-bye, sir—one grip of yer hand! If I never come back from this—remember the Firemen live and die, *single-handed, for duty.*"

F. ALLAN LAIDLAW.

By permission of the Author.

NOT IN THE PROGRAMME.

Ah, good evening to you agen! So you've brought the proof then, eh?
 "Macbeth, Mr. HUBERT VILLIERS." Yes, that's better, I must say.
 Now, what'll you take? Hot whisky? Right!
 What ho, there, Polly, my dear!
 Two fours of Irish warm for me and this other gentleman here.

Not half bad tippie, is it, my boy? Tain't often I drink from choice,
 But I fancy a drop of Irish warm softens and mellers the voice.
 So you liked my Claude last night, you say? Well, 'tis fairish they all allow;
 But I'm getting a bit too old and fat for the lover business now.

Ah, well, I mustn't complain, I suppose! I can stick to the heavy line,
 And I've got a few browns put by, you know, in that old stocking o' mine;

Tho', mind you, with a company near a dozen strong, or quite,
If business is slack, 'tis a tightish fit when it comes to Saturday night,

See some queer things, we travelling folk? Well, yes, that's perfectly true:

Why, 'twas only now while sitting here, smoking and waiting for you,

*I was thinking over a curious scene you may have heard about

That shows how the real thing after all beats acting out-and-out!

I know it's true, for it all took place under my eyes, you know;

Let's see, 'twas at—yes, at Doncaster—about two years ago,

Me and the missus was sitting down at our lodgings one day at tea,

When the slavey told me a lady had call'd, and wanted to speak to me.

"Show her up here," I says, for I thought, "'tis one of our folks look'd round,

To ask me something about to-night;" but I was wrong, I found;

For there enter'd, blushing up to her eyes, shrinking, tremulous, coy,

A lady I'd never seen before, with a charming little boy.

A beautiful blonde she was, not more than two-and-twenty or so,

With witching eyes of a lustrous brown, but, ah, how full of woe!

And she and her boy were dress'd in black, and she wore in a mournful mood,

On her flaxen hair, that was tinged with gold, the weeds of widowhood.

She took the chair I gave her, and spoke in a low sweet voice,

I could see that she was a lady born, she seem'd so gentle and nice;

She'd had some knowledge of the stage as an amateur, she said,

And could I give her something to do to find her boy in bread?

"O, that's how the wind lays, is it?" I thought. "Well, p'raps I might do worse;

If she only acts as well as she looks, she'd nicely line my purse;"

And I took good stock of her as she sat with her boy beside her chair,

And stroked with dainty tremulous hand his bonnie golden hair.

Bit by bit her story came out. Long back her mother had died,

And left her, an only child, to be her father's darling and pride;

He was in the law, and thought to be rich, and was held in high repute,
But, ah! he died a ruin'd man, and left her destitute.

Then the only relative she had—an aunt, who was well-to-do—

Had taken her in, and had found for her a wealthy suiter, too,

But she loved another—a sailor lad—who, like herself, was poor,

And when they married, her haughty aunt had spurned her from her door.

They were very happy at first, she said, and her voice was tearful and low,

But O, she had lost her husband too—he was drown'd four months ago;

His ship was wreck'd, and all were lost; and now, in her need and care,

She'd no one left in all the world, but her little Charlie there!

And she droop'd her head, poor girl, and her voice was chok'd with sighs—

Hem, hem, confound the smoke; how it gets in a fellow's throat and eyes!

Then she finished her tale; she felt at first all stunn'd and dazed, she said;

And even to think of aught but him seem'd treachery to the dead.

But by-and-by, for the sake of her boy, now doubly precious and dear,

She nerved herself to look beyond to the future that seems so drear;

She thought of a governess's place at last, but then they would have to part,

And to give up her only darling now would almost break her heart.

Little by little her things had gone to meet their daily need,

Till her home, too, had to be given up, and all seemed lost indeed;

And she thought of how she loved the stage in the happy long ago.

And how well she play'd, as an amateur—at least they told her so.

She'd call'd at all the theatres she knew, but 'twas still the same old tale—

A novice had no chance at all where even veterans fail;

Then some one had told her to come to me, and she'd travell'd here to-day

To see if I could take her on, in however humble a way.

I should find her quick and willing, she said, in all I wanted done;

And all she ask'd was lodging and food for her and her little one:

She'd nothing left but her wedding-ring and one
poor half-a-crown,
And O, there was only the workhouse, if—and here
she quite broke down!

Well there, the parsons give it sometimes to us
"poor players" hot,
But whatever our faults may be, my boy, we ain't
a hard-hearted lot.
There was the missus a-crying too, with the little
kid on her knee,
And I—well, this weeping business, somehow,
always gets over me!

And the end of it was that I took her on, as a
super, so to speak,
And found her board and lodging with us, and a
shilling or two a week.
She help'd the missus in different ways, and did it
capitally too;
And we sent her on in little parts where she hadn't
much to do.

But a quicker "study" I never knew, and she'd
something better and higher—
I could see that she was an actress born—this
woman had passion, fire!
She took with the public from the first, what with
her sweet young face,
And passion and power, and we gave her soon the
leading lady's place.

Some of our ladies were jealous-like, when they see
her taking the lead,
And used to sneer at her ring and weeds, and
muttered, "Mrs., indeed!"
But she was so gentle, obliging, meek, this soon
wore off, it did,
And they all of 'em got to love her at last, and to
almost worship the kid.

She seem'd transform'd with passion and power
when once she got on the stage,
And Mrs. Mowbray, as she was call'd, came to be
quite the rage;
She'd only to show herself for the cheers to thunder
out, and lor'!
She always was good for three recalls of a night,
and often more!

'Twas the best day's work I ever did when I lent
her a helping hand;
By Jove, sir, as Constance in *King John* that woman
was something grand!
And as for Ophelia, where she sings that song
before she dies,
Harden'd old stager as I am, it brought the tears
to my eyes.

One night I happen'd to be in the front when she
was extra fine;
'Twas in *East Lynne*, and she'd just come on with
her boy, as Madame Vine;

She's supposed, as the Lady Isabel, to have wronged
her husband and fled,
But takes the governess's place disguised, after he
thinks she's dead.

She'd got to that crowning scene of all, where the
mother longs to stretch
Her arms to her boy, but has to check and school
herself, poor wretch!
And the house was hush'd in pity and awe, when I
saw her stare and start,
Then stagger, and turn as white as death, and put
her hand to her heart.

I follow'd her eyes, and there close by in the pit,
looking pale and thin,
Was a tall young fellow in naval dress, who had
only just come in;
He sprang to the stage, and bounded on, and you
can guess the rest.
"O Alice, Alice!" "O Harry, dear!"—and she
swoon'd away on his breast!

I think for a moment the people thought 'twas
part of the play, forsooth;
But her story, you see, had been whispered about,
and they easily guess'd the truth;
And then—ah, talk of a scene, my boy! such cheers
you never heard;
I thought the roof would have fallen in, I did,
upon my word!

Of course, the curtain had to be dropp'd, and I
whisper'd to the band
To strike up something, and hurried behind at
once, you understand,
To find her just "coming to," dear heart, with the
women all weeping there,
And her husband, with her hand in his, kneeling
beside her chair,

And her little one clinging to her—ah! what a
tarbaw that would have been!
'Twould have made the fortune of a piece to have
brought in such a scene!
I've come to look at it now, you see, in a sort of
professional light;
But then I was very nearly as weak as the women
were, or quite.

His story was short; his ship was wreck'd, and
'twas thought that all were drown'd,
But he and another clung to a spar, and were
pick'd up safe and sound;
'Twas more like the Tichborne story agen, than
anything else I know;
Do I believe in the Claimant? Yes, I believe he's
Arthur O.!

They land'd him close to the diamond-fields, and
he wrote to his wife, but she
Believed he was dead, and had changed her name,
and taken service with me;

Then he took a turn at the diggins', and there good
 luck came thick and fast,
 And he'd come back rich to find her gone, but
 they'd met at last—at last!

Then her story was told, and how good I'd been,
 and all the rest, dear heart,
 And she would insist on going on agen to finish
 her part;
 So I went to the front myself, you know, and told
 the people all,
 And, upon my word, I thought this time the roof
 must surely fall.

And when she came on agen at last, what deafen-
 ing thunder o' cheers!

Men, a-waving their hats like mad—women and
 kids in tears!

I thought o' the night when Kean first set all
 England's heart astir;

"Sir, the pit *rose at me!*" he said; and so it did
 at her!

And she seem'd inspir'd, so grand she was, so pas-
 sionate, true, and warm;

From the time she open'd her mouth agen, she took
 the house by storm;

Three times they had her back at the end, and I
 shall never forget

How he had to lead her on at the last—I can see
 and hear 'em yet.

A bonnie couple they were, my boy, to see 'em
 together then—

Hem! bother the smoke; it's been and got in my
 eyes agen!

He dropp'd me a fiver for a feed for the company
 next day,

And she bought me this here diamond ring—up to
 the knocker, eh?

He took a nice little place in Kent, where they're
 living in style, you know;

And there's always a knife and fork for me when-
 ever I like to go;

It ain't so very long ago—perhaps two or three
 months or more,

Since me and the missus were there for a week,
 and was treated "up to the door."

I had their story put in a play, and it answer'd
 pretty well,

But, bless your heart, it wasn't a fetch on the
 genuine article!

Well, good-bye for the present, old friend, if you
 won't have any more;

You won't forget about the bills? Good on yer!
O reowar!

EDWIN COLLIER.

From "*Homespun Yarns*."

By permission of EDMUND DURRANT, Esq.

THE MUSICAL BOX.

HALLO?—what?—where?—what can it be
 That strikes up so deliciously?
 I never in my life—what? no!
 That little tin box playing so?
 It really seemed as if a sprite
 Had struck among us, swift and light,
 And come from some minuter star
 To treat us with his pearl guitar.

Hark! it scarcely ends the strain,
 But it gives it o'er again—
 Lovely thing!—and runs along
 Just as if it knew the song,
 Touching out, smooth, clear, and small,
 Harmony, and shake, and all;
 Now upon the treble lingering,
 Dancing now, as if 'twere fingering,
 And at last, upon the close,
 Coming with genteel repose.

O, full of sweetness, crispness, ease,
 Compound of lovely smallnesses,
 Accomplished trille—tell us what
 To call thee, and disgrace thee not!
 Worlds of fancies come about us,
 Thrill within, and glance without us,
 Now we think that there must be
 In thee some humanity.
 Such a taste composed and fine
 Smiles along that touch of thine.
 Now we call thee heavenly rain,
 For thy fresh, continued strain!
 Now a hail, that on the ground,
 Splits into light leaps of sound!
 Now the concert, neat and nice,
 Of a pigmy paradise,
 Sprinkles then from ringing fountains;
 Fairies heard on tops of mountains;
 Nightingales endued with art
 Caught in listening to Mozart;
 Stars that make a distant tinkling,
 While their happy eyes are twinkling;
 Sounds for scattered rills to flow to;
 Music for the flowers to grow to;

O, thou sweet and sudden pleasure,
 Dropping in the lap of leisure,
 Essence of harmonious joy,
 Epithet-exhausting toy!
 Well may lovely hands and eyes
 Start at thee in sweet surprise;
 Nor will we consent to see
 In thee mere machinery,
 But recur to the great springs
 Of divine and human things,
 And acknowledge thee a lesson
 For despondence to lay stress on.
 Waiting with a placid sorrow
 What may come from heaven to-morrow.

And the music hoped at last,
When this jarring life is past,
Come, then, for another strain,
We must have thee o'er again.

LEIGH HUNT.

[NOTE.—The effect of this piece will be increased by having
toy musical box at hand.]

THE PLEASURE-HUNTER'S DEATH.

I HAVE been used to will, and to do, all my life; and never recollect saying I WILL, that I did not. Is, then, the power of volition to fail me only now, when I say I will live? No—no, life is strong within me. These physicians judge by their own emaciated, fragile bodies; they have no idea how much such a firm-knit, athletic frame as mine can suffer; and, as they pronounced the fiat, a legion of other devils seemed to enter, and run riot in my mind, and appeared to dance about me, laughing and chattering, with a kind of hellish joy, as though it were to welcome me. Where—where—where to welcome me?

These physicians are fools—drivellers; they say I must sleep; and one of their cursed potions has procured me an hour of hellish refreshment. But I am awake, yes, awake once more; and it was but a dream—a thing to laugh at—a thing that we have laughed at together. I am awake; and in opening my eyes to all the realities about me, though those realities are grave doctors, pale faces, hopeless countenances, they are heaven to the hell I have just quitted in awaking. Fred, I dreamed I was in a beautiful garden. Everywhere flowers bloomed around me, and beneath my feet, fresh and fair to look at, blooming as though Nature had just painted them, and sent them forth spangled with dew, to scent the morning air; and I felt, Fred, young again; felt as you and I used to feel when we were boys, and chased the butterflies at Eton. Ha! that twinge!

Oh, that we had never chased anything but butterflies! But we have, Fred. Well, I felt an indescribable longing for every flower that I saw, and I stretched forth my hand to pluck them; and as I plucked them, one by one they withered in my touch; but I still grasped and grasped, on this side and on that; but every one faded, one after the other; and the grass and the bright daisies withered under my feet as I proceeded, till I looked back, and all that was gay before was one blank, scorched-up desert—and I felt a sense of desolation. Suddenly the desolation changed, and I found myself, how I cannot tell, in that Paradise of Mahomet, which, in our hours of folly, we used to think was such a charming thought of the prophetic hypocrite, and made us cease to wonder at the rapidity with which, in his early career, he made proselytes to his faith. And there were

women, beautiful women! the bane of both of us, Fred, flitting about in all the loose attire of Eastern costume, amidst the shady groves and bowers of roses with which the place was filled; and all the passions of my nature—those fiery passions—but you know them—seemed roused; my loss of blood was not felt in my sleep; and I pursued, and caught in my outstretched arms, a lovely form, that resisted me no more when it felt my warm arms entwined around her. It turned, and I beheld Fanny! lovely as when we first knew her, with her blue eyes and flaxen tresses; and I had all the feelings of former times; and there was everything about her that was lovely in woman—the soft lip, the heaving bosom, the rounded form—and I pressed her to my heart, when suddenly the cheeks assumed a livid hue—the eyes became sunken, yellow, and lustreless—the heaving bosom shrank into ungainly folds—the firm flesh seemed to soften with disease, and she sank a corpse out of my arms on to the ground. Still the same burning passions seemed to drive me on, and I caught one lovely form after another, only to feel them die—do you understand that?—to feel them die; aye! even as Othello seems to do, when hanging over Desdemona he feels pulse by pulse slacken and evaporate, till he appears to have taken leave of the world and all the life it contains in the words—"She is dead!"

And thus one after another failed me. Beauty turned to blackness, life unto death, at my touch, as the flowers had done before; and yet there remained the same fiery determination to pursue—the same burning impetus to urge me onward. At length but one remained, and she fled from my pursuit—and faster and stronger than all the rest. But I came up with her, and it was—Agnes! Let me breathe at the name, or rather let me shudder. It was Agnes, all that I remember her—the loveliest I had seen! and she smiled upon me, and talked peace and comfort to me, and my heart seemed to forget all that had gone before. And my arms were once more around her, and her head drooped upon my breast, and I pressed her closely, and her kerchief fell in the light struggle; and I stooped my lips to press them upon her bosom, when, to my horror, as I breathed upon it, it turned black—black, and a huge serpent seemed to be coiling round its beauties, and covering them with its venom; and I looked up, and her face was fleshless—her sockets were eyeless—her teeth were lipless; the arms that were around me were mere bones, and the fingers that pressed mine were thin strings of sinews, still warm and wet with flesh that had just fallen from them, and upon which myriads of worms were preying in a grave which yawned at my feet; and I heard a laugh and a voice, and I looked into the grave, and it was Trevor, calling upon me to bring his wife—and she obeyed the call—and I could not disentangle myself from her firm grasp, but was forced forward, till

we fell—fell—fell into the loathsome grave together; and I awoke—awoke, and found this earth a heaven! Fred, if there be a hell, I have been there—and these doctors, these dolts, would have me sleep. Oh! I hope I shall ne'er sleep again; I would rather invent some machine to prop my eyes open than take their cursed opiates to damn me before my time. If I am to die, I will die waking.

Fred, I have been trying to summon to my aid all the arguments of those philosophers in whom we used so much to delight, from the ancients down to Voltaire and Rousseau, and my mind has clung with an indescribable tenacity to all those which were wont to be so convincing to us in the heyday of our enjoyments; and they are all fresh in my memory. I can repeat them every word; but it is all in vain; all their strength, all their seeming truth, seem to elude my grasp, like the phantoms in my dream. As I catch at them, and attempt to hang my faith upon them, they all dissolve one after another into airy nothingness, and all at the word *death*. This magic word seems to dispel all those dreams of philosophy, upon the truth of which we pinned our faith. DEATH! how I hate the word; and yet, if I look through my window, I see it written in gigantic characters on the broad blue sky. If I look round my chamber, I see it written like the fate of Belshazzar on the walls, and inscribed in the pale faces of my physicians and servants. If I bury my face in my pillow, I see it there—*death!*—DEATH!—nothing but DEATH written everywhere. Who would think that five simple letters could produce a word with so much terror in it! Oh!—

PUSSY'S BETTER NATURE.

ONE Garrick said, as in this tale you'll find,
 "A fellow feeling makes one wondrous kind";
 Human indeed, and happens oft in life,
 When others share with us our woe and strife.
 The tale I should like to tell you is of a cat—
 A strange incident, and one you'll wonder at;
 In fact I'm sure you'll scarce believe it,
 That a cat once refused to eat a linnet!
 You shall hear it, if you will, as from her lips;
 Should she fail or seem to make false slips,
 Then I'm at hand to help her with her task,
 And that you will sympathise and patient be,
 Is all I ask.

"'Twas a cruel thing to do, being my only one;
 They drowned four daughters in the well,
 But left my little son;
 And then they stole him from me.
 I left him scarce a minute,
 Sleeping sweetly in his bed, whilst
 I went to see that linnet

Hanging at the window there;
 She was making such a noise,
 Worse than my young masters do,
 And they are very dreadful boys.
 I didn't intend to eat her, I simply wished to say
 As I had had no sleep all night I should like to
 sleep all day,
 If she only would be quiet and not keep chirp-
 ing so;
 I suppose she wouldn't hear me, for she paid no
 heed, I know,
 So I climbed upon the table and gave her cage
 a tap,
 Meaning to say "Be quiet, you must be when I
 rap,"
 But no, not she, the bird was deaf, and chirruped
 all the more;
 My anger rose, I swore at her, I sprang at her,
 and open flew the door!
 Then my better nature vanished, I could see her
 in my power—
 The bird was doomed to *die!*—no longer in her
 bower,
 Should she assert her right, I determined now to
 eat her
 If I sat there all the night.
 The cage kept swinging to and fro, but there the
 biped sat;
 I tried to reach her with my paw, I longed her face
 to pat;
 But coaxing would not do the dead, so the only
 thing to do
 Was to spring again upon her,
 And try and drag her through the door which held
 her captive.
 I could not understand why she remained so passive
 when freedom was at hand,
 I'd pictured her as leaving her prison when she
 could,
 Of flying off in search of life; I quite believed she
 would.
 I did not know the reason then, in fact, did not
 until
 I'd reached the cage and peered within, and she
 pecked me with her bill,
 For another bird was with her, a tiny half-fledged
 one;
 There was another mother in the house who also
 had a son!
 How could I eat her now?—I was a mother too!
 I stood and watched them where they sat, reason-
 ing what to do—
 Refuse the dainty morsels! Yes! remember yours—
 alone;
 Just then I heard a cry, a low and plaintive moan;
 Was it my child who wanted me and cried out in
 despair?
 I sought our home in search of him, but my trea-
 sure wasn't there!
 My love was blind, he couldn't have moved unless
 he had been carried,

Why had I left him all alone? Why also had I tarried?
 Watching for that horrid bird, and after all I'd done,
 Sparing that linnet and her child and then to lose my son!—
 I tore about in search of him, to every room I hid,
 The drawing-room, the dining-room, the kitchen then I tried;
 Ah, joy! my grief was over, my misery at an end;
 Cook's arms I found around my son, she'd shown him to a friend!"

ANNIE HUGHES.

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THE C'RRRECT CARD.

"C'RRRECT card, sir? C'rrect card, sir? What, you've seen my face before?
 Well, I dare say as how you have, sir; and so have many more;
 But they passes me by without a word—but perhaps it's just as well;
 A poor crippled chap like me, sir, ain't fit company for a swell.
 But I've seen the time when they all was proud with me to be talking seen—
 When I rode for Lord Arthur Forester and wore the black and green.
 "How did it happen? I'll tell you, sir. You knew little Fanny Flight—
 Old Farmer Flight's one daughter—always so pretty and bright?
 You used to joke with her sometimes, sir, and say as if you she'd marry,
 You'd set up a 'pub' together, an' pitch your folks to Old Harry.
 You was just down for the holidays, sir, from Oxford, where you was at school;
 But you only played at being in love, while I . . . was a cursed fool!
 "Well, there was lots of 'em after her, sir, what with her ways and her face;
 But I, was in earnest, you see, sir, and rode a waiting race.
 'Twas one fine April morning, when she came out to see us train,
 And just as she stood with her little hand holding on by my horse's mane,
 I felt as how I could do it, and came with a rush, you see,
 And I said to her—all of a tremble, sir—'Fan, will you marry me?'
 And she blushed, an' smiled, an' whinnied, and after a bit she agreed
 That as soon as I had found the money for our keep and feed,

Why, we'd run in harness together. We'd ha' made a tidyish pair;
 For I weren't a bad-looking colt at the time, an' she—such a nice little mare!
 Such a mouth! such a forehead! such action!
 Ah! well, let 'em say what they may,
 That's the sort to make running with us, sir—though, damn it! they never can stay!"

"Well, the time went on, and I rode my best, an' they called me a 'cuteish chap,
 And Lord Arthur put me up to ride for the Leicestershire Handicap.
 Lord Arthur, he was a gentleman—never was stingy or mean—
 An' he said, 'I'll give you five hundred, my man, if you win with the black and green.'
 Well, the horse I rode was Rasper; perhaps you remember him well?
 Black, all but one white foot, sir; and a temper!
 —he'd pull like h—l;
 But jump like a bird if he had a mind—plenty of power and pace—
 And I knew he had it in him, and I swore I'd win the race.

"The night before the race came off I went down to Farmer Flight's—
 They'd got to expect me regular now on Tuesday and Friday nights—
 And I told her what Lord Arthur said, and how, if I chanced to win,
 We'd go into double-harness on the strength of his lordship's tin;
 And she put my colours in her hair and her arms around my neck,
 But I felt . . . but, damn it! a chap's a fool as can't keep his feelings in check.
 But then, you see, sir, I was a fool—a big one as ever was seen—
 But then I was only twenty when I rode in the black and green.

"I got up early next morning, an' felt as light as a feather,
 And I went to start for the stables; and mother she asked me whether
 I'd not take my flask in my pocket, in case it might come in handy;
 But, 'Mother,' I says, 'when a chap's in love, he don't feel to want any brandy.'
 And I thought, as I put on a new pair o' spurs, and a jacket bran new and clean,
 That I'd give long odds that I'd pull it off—ten to one on the black and green.

"Well, Lord Arthur gave me my orders and a leg up on to my horse,
 And I just had taken my canter, an' was coming back up the course,

When who should I spy but Fanny, in a stylish sort of trap;
Talking away like blazes to a dark long-whiskered chap!
But I hadn't time to think of more, for we got the word to start,
And Rasper gave a thundering tear that nearly pulled out my heart;
An' then I pulled him together, for mine was a waiting race,
And I knew that what was to win it was Rasper's turn of pace.

"Well, I got round all right the first time; the fences were easy enough—
At least, to a couple like *we* were; the only one that was tough
Was a biggish hedge, with a post and rails; but the taking off was fair,
And I shouldn't call it a dangerous jump, as long as you took it with care;
And Rasper—that very morning I said to Lord Arthur, I said,
'I think as that horse there could jump a *church* if he took the thing into his head';
An' that morning he went like a lady, and looked as bright as a bean,
And I knew, if it only lasted, I'd win with the black and green.

"I was riding Rasper easy, when, just as we passed the stand,
It struck me the carriage that Fanny was in was somewhere upon my right hand;
And I took a pull at Rasper and a glance towards that side,
And I saw what made me forget the race, and forget the way to ride—
Only a kiss! And what's a kiss to the like of him and her?
But I couldn't help letting Rasper feel that I wore a long-necked spur;
And though I set my teeth to be cool and steadied him with the rein,
I knew that the devil in Rasper was up, and couldn't be laid again;
An' the very next fence, though I kept him straight, that he went at after the rest,
I could feel that he meant to do his worst; and I couldn't ride my best.
For, you know, when a man feels desperate like, he's no more head than a child;
And it's all up with a jock, you-see, if he goes at his fences wild.

"Over the next fence—over the next till I thought, as my teeth I set,
If I could only keep my head to the work, I might pull through with it yet;

And I took a pull at Rasper, an' fell back a bit to the tail,
For I'd never forgot the one difficult spot—the hedge with the post and rail.
How it all comes back! We're in the field—now for a rattling burst,
For the race is half won by the horse and man that crosses that fence the first.
I run up to my horses and pass them—I've given Rasper his head;
I can hear, some lengths behind me, the trampling and the tread;
And now I send him at it, firmly but not too fast—
He stops, lays his ears back—REFUSES! *The devil's come out at last!*
And I dig in the steel and let him feel the sting of stout whalebone,
And I say, 'You *shall* do it, you devil! if I break your neck and my own!'—
And the brute gives a squeal, and rushes at the post and rail like mad—
No time to rise him at it—not much use if I had;
And then . . . well, I feel a crash and a blow, and hear a woman scream,
And I seem to be dying by inches in a horrid sort of a dream.

* * * * *
"No, thank ye—I'd rather not, sir. You see, they ain't all like you;
These gents as has plenty of money don't care who they gives it to;
But as for stopping an' saying a word, an' hearing a fellow's tale,
They'd rather give him half-a-crown, sir, or stand him a quart of ale;
But it brings back old times to be talking to you.
Ah! the jolly old times as I've seen,
When I rode for Lord Arthur (c'rrect card, sir?), and wore the black and green!"

FRANK DESPREZ.

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THE 'ISTORIC NINTH O' NOVEMBER.

"Yes, I'm a reg'lar old 'and at the game, consequently I speaks with horthawrity. Them Laid Mayer's Shows is a boon an' a blessin' to us chaps; for there's alwers a chance o' earnin' a few bob hextra, and a bit of a feed; but it's got to be earnt, I tells yer. We deserves all we get, we does. The wether's alwers so bloomin' cowl'd. Most o' you City gents would quake with fear, as Makbeth, Thane of Cawder, says, if you 'ad to be in our shoes, I can tell yer. Fancy a cove bein' perched up on the top of a hembematic car, wearin' tights an' a ridikulussy thin toonic an' nothink else, on a raw, foggy day, with, perhaps, a shower or two o' rain

throne in as a sort o' makeweight; that's just what us poor supes has got to put up with as hoften as the 'istoric Ninth o' November comes round. Why, it's a perfect marterdum us suffers; that's wot it is. The Lawd Mayer knows it well enuf, but he ain't got no time to think about us poor chaps an' our feelin's, while he's a-being drove threw the streets by richly carparisoned steeds in his state coach, which alwers puts me in mind of Cinderella going to the prince's ball in her kokle-shell keridge in the pantermime. They couldn't do without us reg'lar theater supes in there Civik Progresses, as they calls 'em. They must 'ave the likes o' us to infest the proceedings with becomin' dignity. Other coves as they might pick up off the streets, such as sandwidge men, and some o' the hunim-ployed as goes in for spoutin' on Tower-ill, they couldn't even keep theirselves from fallin' off the cars, much less look the keracters they are supposed to ripresent. I can just fancy meself seein' one o' 'em a-tryin' to look as if his teeth wasn't chatterin' with the cowl, an' the raw wind a'most a-cuttin' his poor legs in two. Then only think o' their knock knees! Has for gettin' hinside a soote o' armer, or ridin' on a fiery charger, or walkin' in solem percession on foot, the likes o' them riff-raff couldn't attempt it without bringin' disgrace on the whole show. Yer wants to 'ave been brought up on the boards to make a theatricle costum sit properly. Now, my perfessional pals alwers tells me as I must 'ave got a smell o' the footlighs with my mother's milk, 'cause I alwers makes the keracter I am himpersonatin look so natural-like an' dignified. It's quite true wot Billy Shaky-speer says: "A man in 'is time plays many parts." They do say in the perfession as 'ow he started life as a supe, so he hought to a' known what he was talkin' about. Their's very few things in the suping line as I ain't done in my time, though it's hagaint hettykett, I knows, to speak of meself. Nothink comes amiss to me, from a hinfuriated citizen, or a bandit kerosuin', or a captin' o' the guard, up to one o' them most potent, grave, and reverend seniors wot Othello keeps on jawin' to in his Hadress to the Sennitt. That's why the City Farthers, as they calls 'em, alwers will insist on yer 'umble servant takin' part in the Lawd Mayer's Show. But I don't consider it no conjure. I objects decidedly to bein' stage-managed in a backyard. Then there's the hinconvenyence o' havin' to 'assom yer costum in hout-o'-the-way corners, contiguous to the stage, I mean the Gildhall Yard, where the percession alwers starts. I don't ask for the Haldermen's Council Chamber, but I do think some better provision might be made for the representatives of the legitimet dramer as 'as been used to proper ackommodation, dressin'-rooms with mirrors an' carbits, an' sich like aksessories. An' talkin' o' provisions reminds me that a good stiff basin of turtle soup to warm our hinsides afore settin' hout in the percession would be a desider-

artum, as I once heard Mister 'Enery Hirvin' say on a horspicious occasion. Wnot they want to 'ave the Lawd Mayer's Show for at the beginnin' o' winter 'as alwers been a puzzle to me an' a lot o' my mates. If they'd 'ave it in the 'ight of summer, when London is supposed to be empty, an' consequently there'd be nobody left to see it an' poke fun at us, there'd be some sense in that. Another kwestion as I'd like to ask is, Wnot do they alwers want to 'ave a bloomin' lot of fire engines trailin' after the percession for? Wnot have they got to do with the Lawd Mayer's Show? They don't belong to hany o' the trade gilds, as they calls 'em, an' I never heard of a Lawd Mayer as 'ad ever been a fireman. The only good they do, it seems to me, is to make us poor blokes envious at seein' 'em lookin' so comfortable in their own warm clothes, while we hes got to go about shivering with the cowl in dishabille; that's just wot I thinks about it. I wonder what keracter I'm a-goin' to himpersonate in the Show this year! Last year I was put to the hinconvenyence o' blackin' up for a Harab on 'orseback in front of a hembematic car in the wholesale grocery line. Blow me, if it wasn't enuf to make me throw the whole bloomin' job up! My 'onered perfession is the legitimet dramer, an' it's 'ard to 'ave to condescend to the nigger-minstrel business. Howsomever, it's only in strikt justice to them City funkionaries to say as we get a hextra good pay when hany o' them hextra hunpleasant jobs his imposed on us. So it ain't for us poor chaps to grumble. Lawd Mayer's Day comes only once a year, an' when it does it brings good cheer to the likes o' us. Them has is for doin' away with the Lawd Mayer's Show ain't got a hatom o' respect for Hart or Hantiqwities, or hanythink helse. The Lawd Mayer's Show is a hinstitution without which no City o' London would be complete. So, for the sake o' them has 'as got to come after me, may the future Lawd Mayer's Shows be as noomerous as the bristles on a noo broom and the sands on the sea-shore. Them's my sentyments!"

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

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THE PHANTOM DEBTORS.

I WAS sitting in my study,
In the waning light of eve,
By the firelight warm and ruddy,
Which I didn't like to leave;
I was dozing, half reposing,
In the twilight of the mind,
When Memory's gates, unclosing,
Show the scenes we've left behind.

I saw the lost, the dearest,
And I clasp'd their phantom hands,
And relatives, the nearest,
Tho' afar in foreign lands;

I saw my childhood's fancies,
And my castles in the air,
My long-destroyed romances,
Rise again, complete and fair.

I saw my lost umbrellas,
And the books, long overdue,
Which I'd lent to "dear old fellows,
All returned, as good as new!
And I saw, oh! milk and honey
On the pilgrims' desert track,
The friends who'd borrow'd money,
And had come to pay it back!

They enter'd, round me pressing
In a large and loving crowd,
With many a murmur'd blessing,
And with greetings long and loud;
Bank-notes bestrew'd my table,
Gold and silver fell like dews;
And there rose a pleasant babel:
"Give us back our IOU's!"

In rapture I return'd them,
Old and mildew'd, but intact,
With thanks, for they had earn'd them,
By this good, this noble act;
I falter'd, much affected,
"Dearest friends, you make me weep,
So kind—so *unexpected!*
Oh! my gratitude is deep!

"There are heroes famed in story,
You are greater, in my eyes;
There are martyrs gone to glory—
You deserve a higher prize;
Your deed shall be recorded,
Blazon'd forth from pole to pole,
And in better worlds rewarded,
When the earth has ceased to roll!"

Then cordially we parted,
Angels' visits are but brief,
I felt quite broken-hearted,
Till the coin assuaged my grief.
Alas! while fondly gazing
On that bright and godly pile,
I woke!—'twas gone!—amazing!—
I'd been dreaming all the while!

O, cruel god of slumber!
Bringing false delusive bliss,
Why! why my dreams encumber
With *absurdities* like this?
This vision, sweet and sunny,
In a world so drear and black,
Of friends who borrow money,
And who came to pay it back!

WALTER PERKE.

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FELL FROM ALOFT.

"Fell from aloft, in the restless sea,"
Shriek the wild birds that o'er ocean flee;
Lost in the depths shall a loved one be,
While a mother's heart breaks silently.

A gallant bark, by Afric's Cape,
Was speeding fast towards India's strand,
A jaunty flirt as o'er did 'scape
King Tempest's cruel, crushing hand;
And now the breeze blew fresh and strong,
Despite the heat the fierce sun shed,
While lounging sailors humm'd the song
And view'd with pride the wings o'erhead;
The ocean's hue,
So deeply blue,
Was broken with waves with white-foam'd tip,
White as the wings of the dainty ship,
Bright as the sunlit sky o'erhead,
Merry and dashing as on she sped,
As this storm-coquette with her lightesome skip.

Hark! from aloft, a skyward hail,
Sings down for sailor-tools below;
A boy springs lightly to the rail,
A blue-ey'd boy, aloft to g'd.
No fear has he, this sailor child,
His flaxen curls the winds blow wild;
His feet are bare, his heart beats free,
His face but new brown burnt at sea,
And he sings as he clammers with height'n'ing glee,
Now clinging by cords that mere threads seem to be.
From the round-top he climbs to the cross-trees
above—

Oh! fond, doting mother, could'st but see thy
love—

Higher and higher, his curls dazzling bright,
His heart leaps with pride, he reaches the height,
Where a sailor's at work on the uppermost spar,
Singing songs of the home that he's leaving afar.
There's a crack—and a scream—and the man huge
the mast,

As he views, in cold horror, the boy falling fast,
With vainly spread arms, to the ocean's blue breast,
To the high-leaping wave and its hungering crest,
And the ship's fitting shadow falls low like a pall,
As the sea-birds scream by with a requiem-call!

"Man overboard!" shrieks he o'erhead,
The ship, to the helm, comes round;
A boat is launched in silence dread,
But the boy was never found;
Strong men wept as they sought the child,
Never again to be seen,
And 'mid the waves they search'd and toil'd
Till night fell over the scene.

'Tis said Old England proud uprears
Her strength upon a rock;
That rock is hearts that know no fears,
That brave the direst shock;

Her sons' stout hearts, her hope and joy,
Have made her strong and free;
Such was the heart of that brave boy,
Drown'd from aloft at sea.

BRANDON THOMAS.

By permission of the Author.

PARIS IN DYSPEPTICS.

I HAD been in a low state of health for some time. My doctor said it was my liver, and recommended a thorough change; so I bethought myself of an old schoolfellow of mine who was living in Paris, and dropped him a line. After reminding him that he had often invited me to pay him a visit, I explained that the time had at last arrived when I could take him at his word. I told him what was the matter with me—dyspepsia. It sounded so much more refined than biliousness or liver, you know. This was the answer he sent me: "Come, by all means. I'm sorry I can't put you up at my own place, but I can get you a snug little bedroom close by, where you'll be very comfortable." Then followed a lot of gush about "cementing old friendships," &c., which would have been better left out. Burgess was always a gushing sort of fellow, but he meant well. So in the course of the next half-hour I had packed my portmanteau and set off on my journey.

I suppose everybody, more or less, knows what crossing over from Dover to Calais is? That is a thing I would rather not dwell upon—I mean the Channel steamer. Oh, how dreadfully ill I was! If I could only have fed the little fishes, like most of my fellow-passengers, I might have been able to say good-bye to my dyspepsia when we touched dry land again; but I wasn't even the least bit—well! *mal de mer*, though I felt as ill all the time as a man could possibly be. Let us draw a veil over the picture, as the novelists like to put it.

When we reached Calais at last, I nearly had my clothes torn off my back in trying to secure a seat in the train. The carriage I occupied was chock-full of passengers; but the only one I took particular notice of was a dark, thick-set foreigner with a chocolate cheek. I couldn't bear to look at him, so I closed my eyes. I should mention that I had taken no refreshment of any kind from the time we left Dover, feeling too ill; but just before the train started at Calais I had bought myself an orange, and as soon as we were fairly off I made an attempt to moisten my lips with it. Seated in my corner, I bored a hole well into it with my penknife, and silently and unobtrusively began to suck it. As ill luck would have it, a stray pip suddenly leapt from it and struck the chocolate cheek of my neighbour with an audible damp *click*! He was fast asleep at the time, but of course instantly awoke. After glaring all round the

carriage he fastened his eyes menacingly upon me. I tried to look innocent and drowsy, and the next minute pretended to fall asleep. With the half-sucked orange firmly clutched in my hand, but secreted by my side, I snored the whole way to Paris. So that I had anything but a lively journey of it; and never felt so thankful in my life as when the train at last steamed into the Gare du Nord in Paris. Burgess was there to meet me; but our meeting was much more formal than I had looked for. However, I cleared my luggage, and we drove off.

"Well, old boy!" said Burgess, "so you think you're ill, eh?"

"Oh, I'm not *very* ill!" I answered testily. "I'm dyspeptic, that's all."

"Well," said he, with a laugh, "I can only tell you that Paris is positively the most bilious place in creation."

This was consoling, and I couldn't help ruminating to myself on the prospect in store for me, until Burgess relieved the monotony by calling out, "Halloo, here we are!"

The cabriolet pulled up in front of a gloomy mansion in the middle of a long narrow street, which was about as cheerful as Gower Street on a wet day. Burgess alighted and rang the bell. When the door opened, as it appeared, of its own accord, I just caught a glimpse of the concierge—a diabolical-looking old man in a red nightcap.

Burgess seized a candlestick, and with my portmanteau between us we toiled up innumerable stairs. My "snug little bedroom" was at the very top, overlooking a perfect sea of roofs at the back, with the Madeleine in the distance. It was a small, ill-smelling, mysterious sort of room altogether; and as I sat on my portmanteau, fatigued after the tramp of so many stairs, I felt very much inclined to cry.

"Now then," said Burgess; "hurry up, and we'll go out to dinner."

I did my best to "hurry up," and down those interminable stairs we went again, *en route* to dine.

"We'll do it on the cheap," said Burgess.

I was too dyspeptic to argue the matter, so at once we went in for a course of cheap grease and sour wine. What we had I haven't the remotest idea; I only know it was nasty. The dinner over, we went to the theatre; I think it was the Porte St. Martin. We arrived late, and paid for cheap seats—in the gallery. The heat of the place was awful. I remember, as we entered, the audience screamed "Silence!" and appeared to scream at us. I fell over wooden stools, and squeezed myself past endless rows of fat people, who resented the intrusion in no friendly terms. I forget what the play was about; in fact, I never had a chance to find out. I only remember seeing a woman being dragged round the stage by the hair of her head, and screaming all the time, "Vous êtes un assassin!" My neighbours seemed to rock with excite-

ment; and whenever I moved so much as an eyelash I was reproved. I had an opera-glass jammed somewhere against my side; but to attempt to get at it was more than I dared. Whenever, in gentle whispering English, I tried to speak to Burgess, he said, "Shut up, or you'll be turned out!" This was more than I could bear; I felt if I didn't go out, I should shout. I became so nervous that when at last I had released my opera-glass from its case, I let it drop on the floor with a great deal of noise. Then the audience fairly rose at me. Heedless of their curses, I rose too, and literally fought my way to the door. "Air!" I shouted. "Sit down!" muttered Burgess. "Never!" I cried. About a quarter of an hour later—though it seemed more like a week—I tumbled out into the corridor, and fell exhausted upon a red velvet fauteuil. Oh! how I wished myself at home again! By-and-by Burgess joined me. "Come on," said he, linking his arm into mine, "come with me to the waxworks!"

I have often wondered since whether he thought waxworks were good for dyspepsia. Perhaps they are, according to the French idea. I was too ill to think at all. My mind was a bilious blank, and I suffered myself to be led from the theatre down the Boulevard to the Musée Grévin. We paid our francs, passed the turnstile, and found ourselves in a room in comparison with which the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's was a glare of glittering gaslight glory. Burgess bought a catalogue, and was soon immersed in the exhibition, leaving me gazing in silent horror at the figures all around. I don't think the place agreed with me very much; but I pulled myself together, bought a catalogue, set my teeth, and began to revel in the horrors by which I was surrounded. I forgot all about Burgess. I went through the whole collection, figure by figure. Led on by dyspepsia, I visited "Les Souterrains" and "L'histoire d'un Crime"; through every horror I waded. My mind became more morbid and gloomy at every turn. At last I found myself gazing upon a singularly horrible tableau—the murder of a Garçon du Banque by a ruffian, who was rifling the safe of a goodly pile of notes. I shall never forget that ruffian! Having despatched his victim, he was supposed to be counting the notes over the body, but seemed to be looking straight at me. This was too much; I fled from the scene, merely saying "Good-night" to Burgess as I hurried past him. A hired conveyance put me down outside the maison at whose top was situated the "snug little chamber" I was to occupy during my short sojourn in gay Paris. I rang the bell; and again the mysterious door opened of its own accord. In groping my way upstairs I stumbled over endless boots and other obstacles.

Finding my door had no fastening, I put my portmanteau against it. The room was stuffy and close, so I opened the window. It was a beautiful

moonlight night. I stepped out on to the balcony and gazed on the Madeleine. At my feet lay Paris—a brilliant scene truly, albeit to me a bilious one. Presently, when I turned to re-enter my room, I became conscious of the truth that I was not alone. A figure, separated from me only by an iron bar between the two balconies, was gazing at the Madeleine too. Of course, whoever it was, he had a perfect right to stand on his own balcony, but I thought the incident fearfully "jumpy"; and at once proceeded to retreat, keeping my eyes fixed on the mysterious stranger. As far as I could see, he took not the slightest notice of me. In spite of the fear that overcame me, I felt irresistibly impelled to address this apparition. I said in my best French, "Bon soir." There was no answer; the figure continued to gaze stolidly at Paris. I gave a last look at it, and then hurriedly retreated within my chamber. After skirting round my "bain de siège," which stood in front of the window, ready for my morning bath, I went to bed in my high hat, and with my umbrella (my only weapon of defence) firmly grasped in my right hand.

Of course I couldn't sleep. As long as I can remember I kept my eyes fixed on the muslin curtains of the window, and hardly dared so much as breathe. I suppose I must have dozed off at last, because I certainly awoke with a start; and there, with my eyes wide open, I beheld a shadow on the muslin curtains. I never for a single moment doubted that it was the mysterious being of the adjacent balcony. But why, I asked myself, couldn't he keep on his own premises? What did he want to wander about the roofs for, like a demented tom-cat? And why was he on my balcony? Oh, it was agony for me to lie there and watch that shadow! At last, unable to bear the strain any longer, I sprang out of bed. Again I skirted round my "bain de siège," and peered through the muslin curtains. Yes, he was there, on my balcony, with his back towards me, and vacantly staring at Paris. What was I to do? I was alone in a strange house, absolutely defenceless, and already half dead with fright! Once more I felt impelled to address the figure. I don't know to this day how I contrived to muster sufficient courage, but I actually tapped at the window. "Allez vous en?" I shouted; "qui êtes vous?" I don't quite remember what I said after that. I think I said, amongst other things, "Passez moi la moutarde." At last I got desperate. I fairly yelled, "Vé ton animal!" "A votre chambre!" "Tout de suite." But nothing seemed to move him. There he stood, with his back towards me, still gazing at the Madeleine.

"It's evident he doesn't understand French!" I said to myself, and this reflection made me rake up the only German word I knew. "Schstakelschwein!" I shouted at him. This caused him to turn round so suddenly that I promptly sat down

in my "bain de siège." It was indeed an awful position for a dyspeptic man—to be sitting in a bath of ice-cold water, in a high hat, grasping an umbrella, at dead of night, and with a mysterious stranger, who answered to the name of Porcupine, gazing at me through my own window.

He was actually tapping at the window, and speaking to me! "Schstakelschwein!" he said, "you are mein bruder; if you will list on your drowers I will sehpeak mit you!"

I think I said indignantly, "I am not your bruder, and I will not put on my drowers, neither will I speak to you!"

Then, all at once, I seemed to recognise him. Nō; there could be no mistake. He was my chocolate-cheeked companion in the train; and I even fancied I could see the mark that the orange-pip had left on his chocolate cheek. At all events, there was a little white mark there. Suddenly, too, I recognised a strong resemblance between him and one of the wax figures in the Musée Grévin. Yes; he was the murderer of the Garçon du Banque! He was a spy! I was being watched. I was being dragged into a vortex of horrors. Had I become an Anarchist, in spite of myself? With these thoughts flitting across my mind, I scrambled back into bed, and covered there, while the rascally "Schstakelschwein" continued to tap at my window.

I suppose I slept; but the next morning I told Burgess everything. He positively shrieked with laughter; and slyly suggested that I had dined not wisely, but too well! The very idea of such a thing, considering the greasy mess he had made me eat! No Englishman, I am sure, could ever be troubled with nightmare after dining in a Parisian restaurant.

"At any rate," I said, "I don't intend to pass another night in that 'snug little chamber,' as you call it."

"Oh, all right," said Burgess, "you can have a shake-down here. You shall sleep in the little glass room of my office."

So there the matter ended. It was a little slip of a room, partitioned off from the office by means of a large sheet of glass. The office itself contained an iron safe, a writing-table, and all the usual paraphernalia of a business man. We dined greasily as before, had a couple of hours' saunter on the Boulevards, and retired rather early; for Burgess had told me he would have to be up betimes in the morning. Feeling much easier in my mind on account of my secure lodging, as contrasted with the terrors of the previous night, I soon fell asleep, and dreamt that "Schstakelschwein" was dancing the cancan with the President of the Republic in Burgess's office, which was brilliantly illuminated for the occasion. After this diversion had lasted for some time, I awoke to the fact that the office was lighted up in reality. I also heard somebody moving about. Sitting up in a cold sweat of

horror, I peered cautiously through the glass partition. "Great heavens!" some one was riding my friend's safe! It was Schstakelschwein, with the chocolate cheek! The murderer of the Garçon du Banque, and I should soon be the Garçon weltering in my gore! I was never particularly brave, but I had feelings, and I couldn't see Burgess's safe being ransacked without making some effort to save his property. Instinctively I rushed straight at the robber, and caught him over the head with all my might with my umbrella. Though staggered for a moment, he turned and closed with me, and we rolled on the floor together. At last I got the upper hand of him, planted my knee on his chest, and seized him by the throat, only to find—oh, horror!—that I was strangling Burgess!

"What the devil are you up to?" he snorted, as we both sat up on the floor.

"I beg your pardon, old chap," I answered. "I really took you to be Schstakelschwein."

"Rot!" he returned, indignantly. "I was just taking some notes out of the safe for my journey to Orleans. Didn't I tell you I should have to be going before you were up? I haven't a minute to lose. I must be at the Gare d'Orleans by half-past five. And I tell you what," he added; "you'd better be off home; the English mail goes out at 7.25."

I was of the same opinion; so while he caught his train at the Gare d'Orleans at 5.30, I caught mine at the Gare du Nord at 7.25.

CHARLES ALLAN.

By permission of the Author.

A VILLAGE STORY.

"Yes, Clarence—yes, I am sorry, Sorry you're going—and you?"

The fire in his eyes burned brighter, But his words were slow and few;
Nothing they told of the struggle within,
Of the pain that it cost him to go.
"The doctors—they say it is here," he said,
"My cough—that is why, you know,
Why I must leave the old station,
And bid you—bid you Good-bye."

Their hands were clasped in a ling'ring hold,
Eye fondly fasten'd on eye;
But never another word was said.
She stood there alone in the dusk,
The gladness gone out of her budding life,
As the grain is torn from the husk.

Two young hands at the postal "wires,"
In the village—that's all they were,
Writing the fever'd lessons down
That make the big world stir;

But there, in that wayside office,
At the ticking needle's call,
They'd somehow learnt that the flashing words
Were not life's all in all;
That there was a tender thrill than that
Which spun from the quivering wire,
A message—unwritten—they read each eve
By the light of the office fire.

"It is best for Clarence," she told herself,
"Best he should go to seek
For softer air in the Southern shire,
For here it is always bleak."
Better in many ways, perhaps,
Even for her—and yet
What is the throbbing at her heart?
Why are the tired eyes wet?
"Had he but only spoken,
Not have left with the words unsaid!"
And thus her dreams grew into doubts,
Her doubting into dread.

A week gone by since he had left,
Still not *one* little word.
She sat there brooding—brooding long;
For an hour she had not stirr'd.
Strange sadd'ning thoughts wing'd thro' her
brain,

The world seem'd sudden cold;
Hers was the saddest love of all—
The love that is untold.

But he had kept his promise—yes,
Thro' the night the mail-cart sped;
'Twas bearing the message to her
That Clarence had left unsaid:

"More than a thousand words can tell,
I love you—love you, dear;
Nought can my poor hand write but this,
But I feel, love, you are near."

Sudden the cry of the shivering wire
Snapt the thread of her restless dream;
Back to the world it turned her thoughts,
Back from the land of the things that seem.

Hearken, the echo of ringing hoofs!
The mail-cart lights are a gleam out there;
'Tis come—his letter of love—at last;
But duty!—the "wires" first claim her care.

Loudly the trembling needle click'd,
Out flash'd the syllables one by one,
Each like a blow that would strike her down—
Bravely she wrote till the work was done.

What was this message? What were the words,
Driving the blood from her cheek as she read?
'Nothing of joy, or of hope, or of love,
These, only these—"Clarence Dering is dead."

CAMPBELL RAE-BROWN.

By permission of the Author.

COMING HOME.

AROUND the cottage sweeps the northern blast,
Icy and shrill. The giant leafless elms
That tower above the village, moan and bow
Trembling before the fierce, relentless gale;
And the thick snowflakes, at their silent work,
Are swiftly hiding, with a spotless robe,
The brown thatch'd cottage roof. Beneath that roof,
Sad and alone, this bitter Christmas Eve,
An old man sits. His head droops on his breast,
And with a steadfast eye, that seems to read
Past memories or future mysteries
In the red glow, he gazes in the fire.
As a quick dancing gleam now and again
Starts up and plays around his silvery hair,
The furrowed brow, the wan and wasted cheek,
The dull sad eye, the bent enfeebled form,
Proclaim with mute and piteous eloquence
The gnawing anguish of a breaking heart.
And still he sits, and still he gazes on,
As though the fire held all he loved on earth.
All that he loves!—he has no one to love.
His thoughts are in the past, and as he looks
He sees betwixt the bars a Christmas Eve
Ten dreary years ago—it seems to him
Ten centuries—when he, poor broken wretch!
Was light of heart as any man on earth;
The happy husband of a loving wife,
The doting father of a darling child.

And eighteen years of peace and joy had passed,
His fairy child the sunshine of his home;
Eighteen bright years of roseeate happiness,
Without one cloud to dim his sunny life.

Then the dark shadow of the coming doom
Fell o'er his house—and yet he knew it not.
Honest and trusting, open as the day,
Holding man's honour dearer than his life,
Could he read "Villain" in the smiling face
Of that glib youth who won his daughter's love?
And when the mother's heart was stirred with doubt
And vague foreboding of some coming ill,
He answered, laughing, "Never fear, good wife;
Marry above her station? What of that?"
Our Mary's sweet enough to wed an earl;
Trust me, the young Squire's lucky winning her!"
And so his foolish dream went on and on,
Until that awful morn when he awoke
To learn the tidings of her shameful flight,
And gaze upon the wreck of love and home.

Blow followed blow; his poor heartbroken wife,
Crushed by her erring daughter's load of shame,
Sicken'd and drooped; and, all within the month,
Died with her lost child's name upon her lips.
And he was left alone: and as he crept
Back from her grave to what was once his home
His heart was hardened; with a fearful oath
He curs'd alike betrayer and betrayed,
And raising up his hand toward the sky,
"May God abandon me in death," he cried,
"If ever I look on her face again;

Though she were starving at my very door,
May God's curse seize me if I succour her!"
Ten years ago—ten dreary years ago.

Louder and fiercer blows the chilling blast,
Moaning and sighing through the leafless trees;
Closer the old man cowers o'er the fire,
Spreading his hands towards the dancing flame.
"A fearful night," he mutters; then he thinks
Of his grim oath, and wonders—Is she dead?
"May God abandon me——" Hark! What was
that?

Nothing—the wind was howling round the door
And moved the latch a little. But that cry?
Like a stone statue sat the old man there,
His heart like ice, his face the hue of death.
Again that cry. Hush! 'twas a human voice
That mingled with the howling of the wind.
"Father!" A mighty troubling seized the man,
But still he answered not. Faint came the cry,
"Father, have pity on me; let me in!"
And still the old man trembled more and more,
But still he answered not. Loud shrieked the blast
Like some lost spirit in eternal woe;
And as its wail rang louder round the house
Once more that cry came faintly from the door:
"Father, I'm dying! I, your only child!
Forgive me! pity me! Oh, take me home!"
And then a fierce convulsion shook the man;
With a half sob he staggered to his feet
And turned towards the door; but even then
He started back, and throwing up his hands,
"My oath, my oath!" he cried; and, sinking down,
He stopped his ears, and crushed his bleeding heart,
And sat and gazed and gazed into the fire.

The night wore on, the embers sank and died,
The wind howled ever fiercely round the house,
But all beside was still; the cry had ceased.
In the dark chamber motionless he sat,
Shutting his ears against the moaning blast;
Alone—no, not alone; for as he sat
A spirit seemed to pass before his eyes,
And through the gloom he saw his wife's dead face,
Sad and reproachful, gazing into his;
And as she passed a deep and mournful voice
Stole through the fast-closed portals of his ears:
"Too late for mercy now, our child is dead!"

And then the mighty torrent of remorse,
Bursting the floodgates of his anguished soul,
Washed out the crimson record of his oath;
And with a cry that froze upon his lips,
He started to his feet and gained the door.
An awful terror whispered at his heart,
And the dread words rang loud within his ears:
"Too late, too late! our child is dead—dead—
dead!"

He tore the iron fastenings from the door
And flung it wide; and as the shrieking wind
Rushed in triumphant with its snowy freight,
Across the threshold fell—a frozen corpse.

He spoke no word, he never uttered cry,
But clasping his dead child against his breast,

He sank and fell beside the open door,
And his worn soul went forth to meet his child,
And kindly Death joined hand in hand for aye,
The storm their requiem and their shroud the snow.

And when the morning rose, and Christmas bells
Proclaimed glad tidings of great joy to men,
They knelt for mercy at that open door,
Where the great Father of forgiving love
Welcomes His erring children's coming home.

ALFRED BERTIN.

By permission of the Author and
Messrs. CARSON & COMERFORD.

BEARING YOUR "CROSS."

"STAND up, sir," said the counsel to me, when my cross-examination came on. "Don't lean on the rail; it is disrespectful to the Court. So you say you were standing on the kerbstone when the van was coming along, and you distinctly saw it run into the plaintiff's carriage, which was at a stand-still on its proper side?" "Yes, I did." "You say the carriage was standing still; what do you mean by standing still?" "Why, at rest, I suppose." "Don't 'suppose' here, sir, but answer the question. Do you wish the jury to understand that it was absolutely without motion?" "Certainly." "Are you prepared to swear that the horse had all its four legs firmly on the ground?" "I thought so." "Don't 'think' here, sir, but answer the questions. Might it not well have been that the horse was pawing the ground with its fore-foot?" "I owned that this might possibly have been so, without my noticing it. "And would that action communicate no motion to the carriage?" "Possibly it might, an imperceptible motion." "Now, sir, what sort of eyesight have you got?" "Fairly good," I answered. "Oh, only fairly good; the jury will make a note of that. What do you mean by fairly good?" "Well, I can see clearly enough across the street." "Your eyes, I see, look rather red now, what is that owing to?" "I explained that I had a cold in the head." "Ah, a cold in the head! Now, do you ever see double?" "At this insinuation I felt myself turning warm, and was too angry to answer.

"Now, sir, look at the jury, please, and not at the door, though no doubt you would be glad enough to walk through it. (Much laughter.) Who asked you to give evidence in this case?" "I replied that the owner of the carriage had begged my name, as I was a witness of the occurrence; that I had given it to him, and that his solicitor had taken a note of my evidence. "You expect to make rather a good thing out of this, I suppose?" "Nothing but my expenses." "No little dinners; no trip to the Isle of Wight, eh? Do you expect the jury to believe that you come here out of pure love of justice?" "I said I did, whereupon he fairly laughed towards the jury,

and several of them reciprocated. "You seem pretty well accustomed to give evidence, sir; does it often happen to you to be walking along the street and to see occurrences out of which you can turn an honest penny?" I said I really did not know what he meant. He remarked that my prevarication would be duly noted.

He paused, and in my folly I really thought my cross-examination was over; but no. After rustling his papers about, he put his finger on a part of his brief as if quoting from it. "Now," he began, "were you not convicted at the Denbigh Assizes in 1874 for embezzlement?" This was to me such an absurd question that I laughed outright, which led him to continue, "No levity, sir; answer the question," and here he cast his eyebrows again in the direction of the jury. "Well," I replied, "considering that I was never in Wales in my life—" "Don't fence with me, sir; answer the question, Yes or No." "No, then." "As I am instructed, gentlemen, the witness is a time-expired convict, and therefore not to be believed on his oath. I have here a copy record of the conviction of John Smith. How do you prove that you are not the John Smith referred to? Answer the question, plain Yes or No." "How can I—" I began, but was immediately pounced upon by "Plain Yes or No, sir, without note or comment." "Well, but—" I tried again.

Here the judge looked up from his notes, and said severely, "You really must answer the question Yes or No as you are requested." "But, my lord," I began, "he asks me how I prove something; how can I answer with a Yes or—" Whereupon the judge interrupted me more severely still; "I have cautioned you for your own benefit, and it will not be for your advantage to refuse to answer." I was dumfounded; on seeing which the counsel was wreathed in smiles, and continued, "Now that you have done arguing with the Court, sir, will you answer Yes or No?" Here was a pretty predicament. How could I prove that I was not John Smith, of Denbigh, by a Yes or No? I was too exasperated to say anything, and the counsel triumphantly said, "I have been a long time extracting this admission from the defendant, I mean the witness, but we have got him at last."

Then he paused again, but this time I was too wary to imagine it was over, and wondered what fresh tortures he would invent. He began again. "You are a hosiery in the City, I believe?" "Yes." "Ever been bankrupt?" "Never." "Nor made any arrangement with your creditors?" "No." "Have you ever been refused credit by a wholesale house?" I admitted that it might have happened during my early struggles in business. I then had to state my income, the amount of which he sarcastically referred to the consideration of the Income Tax Commissioners. Then came a little more rustling of his papers, and the next question was in a bland and suave manner, so much so that I really

thought he had done persecuting me, and began to pluck up courage. He inquired whether I was married, and replying that I was, said I looked so—"very much married," in fact—and asked how many children I had, and whether they were all well in health. And then he grew a little more stern, and wished to know on what terms I lived with my wife. I said, the best of terms. Was I prepared to swear that I had never thrashed her so badly that I had been burned in effigy by the neighbours?—here he consulted his papers—this occurring on the 24th of July last, 8.17 in the evening. I replied that I never had, and that on the date in question my wife and I were miles apart, she being at Margate and I at Shepherd's Bush. "Oh," he resumed with a "got-him-at-last" sort of air, "so you swear that you were at Shepherd's Bush on July 24, at 8.17 P.M.?" I answered that if not there I was certainly somewhere in the neighbourhood of London. "Then you are really not prepared to swear exactly where you were?" I said not exactly, having no reason to recall that particular date. "I hope your lordship and the jury will note this important admission. Now, sir, we will pass from what is evidently a painful subject to you. Did you ever use harsh language to your wife's mother?" I said that my wife's mother was dead. "And your eldest son, where is he at present?" I said that he was at a boarding-school. "Ah," he exclaimed triumphantly, "that's what I wanted to get at. You may stand down, sir."

I will only note in conclusion a few of the expressions applied to me by "my learned friend" in his address to the jury. "This witness," he said, "whose peculiar demeanour in the box you will all have observed, gentlemen, admits that the carriage might have been in motion, and therefore on the wrong side, though he pretends to split straws with you and calls the motion imperceptible. He claims to have appeared here to-day in the interests of justice. I do not know what your impression was, gentlemen, but mine certainly was that he is an old hand at giving evidence in these bogus cases, and probably makes a good income out of it, which never pays a tax to the Commissioners. (A laugh.) That matter of his conviction at the Denbigh Assizes, will have its due weight with you, I am sure; the pretended mistake of identity is far from clear to my mind, and his ill-timed hilarity on the subject cannot but have disgusted you. The impossibility of extracting a plain 'Yes or No' answer from him, when it comes to a crucial question, has been patent to us all; and the fact of his being refused credit in the City shows what is thought of him there. If any more is wanted to discredit this—well, this man, it is his cruel conduct to his wife on the 24th of July last. If he is innocent in the matter, why is the lady not here to prove it? His alibi on that occasion is the weakest ever attempted to be foisted on a

Court of Justice. When we add thereto his conduct to his mother-in-law, who he acknowledges is dead, the result of his treatment of her, and the fact that his boy has to be kept away at boarding-school from contact with his evil mode of life, we cannot but conclude that he is totally untrustworthy, abjectly base and deceitful, and monstrously——” but I waited to hear no more.

From THE GLOBE.

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THE SHIPWRECK OF LOVE.

OFt in our lives strange scenes appear,
But none so sad to me,
As when, in Autumn's golden prime,
A storm rose o'er the sea.

The sun had sunk behind the clouds,
And birds were whirling round;
While o'er the land a tempest blew,
That moaned with wailing sound.

Quick from their homes, with hastening steps,
Both men and girls rushed forth,
And waited on the strand to watch
The foaming ocean's wrath.

For, sinking fast, a ship was seen,
Her masts all torn away;
And nought remained on that bare deck,
Save one, who knelt to pray.

And as the wind one instant ceased,
Was heard a piteous cry,
That sounded through that evening air,
And still no help was nigh.

I stood all sad upon the pier,
Nor mingled with the rest,
My mind still filled with days long flown,
When life to me seemed blest.

Then dreams of love were in my heart;
Would God, I then had died:
Little I recked of storms and clouds,
If she were by my side.

Now all, alas! is sadly changed,
Hope from my soul is flown;
The loving smile I lived for then
No longer is mine own.

While musing thus, I listless stand,
And watch a fair form glide
From 'midst that crowd and weeping mass,
And rest close to my side.

I gaze once more on that dear face,
And hear sweet sounds again,
And think this heart no longer aches,
That love is not in vain.

But when her glance she raised to mine,
Her tears from anguish fall,
And as the storm bursts forth afresh,
The cause of grief recall.

For clinging to that sinking ship
Is one who stole my love,
And left me sad on earth to grieve,
With hope alone above.

She points now to those angry waves,
With looks of wild despair;
And pleads aloud, in accents deep,
To save one struggling there.

But this poor heart is ever sad,
With wrongs of days ago;
And turning from that weeping form,
Dwell only on my woe.

Again she pleads in heartfelt tones,
And prays now not in vain—
I plunge into that raging sea,
My rival now to gain.

Once more I stand upon that pier,
And place close to her side
The one I saved, so dear to her,
To be her hope and pride.

I wander still, alone and sad,
Along that gloomy shore;
The wild sea-birds still fly around—
My dream of love is o'er.

But alway in my heart there dwells
A pang no time can stay;
For love like mine, that lives through storms,
Can never fade away.

Tho' wind may blow, and nature frown,
One picture I shall see—
A man still clinging to a mast,
A maid on bended knee.

MRS. JOHN MOCATTA.

By permission of the Author.

A GALLANT WESCUÉ.

Aw—I daresay you'll hardly cwedit the stow'y I'm
going to tell,
For I'm only the son of a Marquis, a wegular,
hopeless swell;
And I know that it's most unusual for a bloated
awistocwat
To be anything like a hewo, but—aw—I flatter
myself I'm that.

I know that my gwammar is decent, that I don't
call a fellow a “bloke”;
And if I possessed a donkey—aw—I should not
wefer to my “moke.”

I know my coats aren't seedy—and most of my hats
have bwims,
And I'm out of the hunt for the lead in a ballad
by G. R. Sims.

But still, though the fates have waised me amongst
the upper class,
I've done a deed that the bwaivest plebeian could
scarce surpass,
A deed of stupenduous couwage, and wegular self-
sacwifice,
A deed the fearful stwain of which no man could
suffer twice!

Aw—'twas on the sands of Cwomah, where, in the
autumntide,
I'd taken my wife and her mothah for a week at
the ocean side;
'Twas near the hour of luncheon, and the burning
midday sun
Was wuining my complexion, and—aw—bwowning
me like a bun.

Unequal to much exertion, I lay on my back on
the sand,
And twied to kill time pewusing the book I held
in my hand—
'Twas only a guide to Cwomah, of interest not too
deep,
To pwevent me gently sinking into a peaceful sleep.

My wife was lazily sketching a distant bathing
tent,
My mothah-in-law was scheming how she could
circumvent
The cat of the lodging-house lady, as I sank off to
dweam—
To be startled a little later by a woman's piercing
scweam.

Wousing myself in a moment, and gazing towards
the sea,
I saw at once the tewwor of the howwor that
might be
If I didn't go to the wescue of a person I abhaw—
My extremely disagreeable and impudent mothah-
in-law!

There she stood on an island, an island of yellow
sand,
With a dozen feet of watah between her and the
land,
While behind her the German Ocean was advancing
slowly near—
No wonder the poor old lady was pawalysed with
fear.

I looked aound for assistance, but not a soul was
nigh,
All Cwomah had gone to dine early, and had left
her there to die,
Unless I pwoceeded to save her! I, the bloated
awistocwat,
Undertake the honour and glowy of such a deed as
that!

As I was—aw—hesitating, up came my wife and
cried:

"Oh, look, my own Plantagenet, mamma's cut off
by the tide!"
And the lofty cliffs we-echoed that distant cwy
once more:
"Plantagenet! come quickly! and cawwy me back
to the shore!"

I fancy even portahs have *some* limit to their
stwength,
And I doubt if the sturdiest costah would quite
have gone the length
Of wemoving his sloes and stockings and wading
through the tide
To cawwy a female Tichborne back to the other side.

But with a gwand devotion, wegardless of the fact
That I might be wisking my life, fwiends, I nerved
myself to act;
I stwuggled thwo' the watah, it was vewy nigh
knee-deep—
And on to the lessening island I climbed the bank
so steep:

And I put my arms aound her—and at the
seventh twy
I lifted her to my bosom, keeping her—aw—well
—aw—her *leys* up high—
I baw her thwo' the towwent, back to the sandy
shore,
Safe from the German Ocean and its most tewwific
woar.

'Twas a twuly noble wescue, but there followed in
its twack
Suffewing and wetwibution, for I found I'd
spwained my back,
And cut my toe on a pebble, and caught a cold in
my head—
But the mothah-in-law was wescued, whom I'd
given up for dead.

It's stwange how seldom ladies are pwoperly imbued
With anything wesembling the sense of gwatitude;
For neither my wife nor the pawent I'd westwawed
to her embwace,
Seemed to think my stwength and couwage were
out of commonplace.

As I lay on the sands and panted I heard no words
of pwaise—
No thanks for my self-devotion, no pwoffered
hewo's bays—
The words that at length bwoke silence were but
thirteen, all told:
"Make haste with your shoes and stockings—the
cutlets will all be cold!"

W. SAPPÉ, JUN.

By permission of the Author.

SOBER AS A JUDGE.

I don't care! I say it, and I stick to it, and if necessary, I'll swear it on the biggest Testament or Prayer Book that was ever used for taking an oath upon in any Court of Justice in the kingdom.

You say it's all nonsense, that it was imagination, that I didn't see 'em; but, in the name of all the wise men in the East, how the dickens can you know? You can tell what you see, but that's no reason why you should be able to tell what I see. My eyes were never in your head any more than yours were in mine.

So I say it again, and I'll maintain it through thick and thin, round or solid, that I saw those two as plain as eyes could see them, and that they were there. This is how it was.

Jack Bigley had just done walking his wards at Fawke's.

His governor had come down stunning, bought him a share in an old country practice, and Jack was off to mend broken legs, liniment old women's rheumatics, and to take little strangers—which, as a matter of course, he would dig up with a golden shovel from under the large plantation of rose-bushes in his back garden—snugly in his coat-tail pocket to all the married couples in the district who needed a supply. He was always a good fellow, was Jack; and many's the jolly night he's had in my rooms in Double Street, Borough. I'll bet anybody a sovereign, even money, that there isn't a man living who could brew such good punch out of bad spirits as Jack Bigley could. Oh! the loo we've had, and the rubbers we've played, the oysters we've eaten, and the songs we've sung long after midnight! And when of a morning we've gone down to the hospital with a buzzing in the head, and a sensation as of sick millstones going round and round, who could ever contrive better than Jack a pleasant little pick-me-up in the dispensary?—one which really did pick you up, you know, stand you upon your feet, and set you going, wound up tight, for the remainder of the day. Jack took me by the sleeve one morning in his last week, just before we were going into the theatre, where old Bogus was going to perform his celebrated operation of removing a man's head without chloroform—his operation, you know, for turned brain—and whispered, "To-night—eight sharp—tripe and onions."

Of course I went, and was there to the minute. Tripe?

Yes, I should think there was tripe, and hot potatoes in their jackets; four great dishes of oysters—fat little natives, mind you, none of your shabby Scotchmen, sprawling all over a spongy shell. There was the biggest lobster I ever saw, a splendid salad, a whack of pickled salmon, and just as I entered the room where the supper was spread out, the fellow from the pub round the corner was just putting a bright pewter pot of porter, with a

head on it like a cauliflower, at every man's elbow; for they were already seated—seven, and a place left for me. That was a supper—the remains were not worth much—and the noise we had made over it was only the overture to the play about to begin; for no sooner was the table cleared than Jack's big spirit stand was fetched out, a kettle of hot water was singing on the hob, the waiter brought in lemons and sugar, pipes and tobacco, Jack put his cigar box beside them, and then, while we religiously set to work to fill the room with smoke, Jack slipped out into his bedroom, returned with his washhand-basin, which he swore was perfectly clean for the occasion, and in it brewed the biggest jorum of punch I ever saw in my life.

It wasn't too big for us, for we went again and again, Jack's face beaming as he ladled out the steaming compound. And then the harmony! Talk about making the welkin ring! You should have heard us make the glasses ring till somebody in the next house hammered at the wall; when, taking it for applause, we immediately sang him "Rambling Dan" with the "Ha! ha!" chorus, and the five "hurrahs!" at the end of every verse. You mayn't know the song, but it is always sung with a full orchestral accompaniment—poker, shovel and tongs, tea-spoons on the edges of glasses, the chair man, of course, beating time with a hammer upon the mahogany table. We had no sooner finished than there was a tapping on the wall on the other side, which of course meant "encore"! So we sang it again with two extemporised verses, composed for the occasion by Jack Bigley. Directly after this there was a knock at the door, which opened, and a man said something about a noise; but as we all with one consent made a rush at him, he fled, and we were allowed to enjoy our harmony in peace for the rest of the evening.

It wasn't all singing, you know. We had a game at cards, but it was voted slow; and Tom Burrows did the frog on the stone in the middle of the table with a candle at each corner. Bob Rummins, too, did his balancing tricks with three full tumblers of grog on a cane-bottom chair—balanced on his chin without spilling a drop. He tried standing on his head upon a quart decanter, and got on pretty well till Tom Burrows spirked him in the ribs with the waxy end of a pipe stem, when he went over backwards into the coal-scuttle, and then wanted to fight Tom for half a sovereign.

It was all over, though, directly, bless you; and they shook hands, and were the best of friends; when, to keep the game alive, Jack Bigley went and got a pint Guinness's stout bottle, cleared the table, and putting the neck downwards, sat on the bottom, and spun himself round.

Bless you, it was beautiful! I never saw anything like it. His hands and legs flew out, and he went round like a teetotum or a top; till Tom Burrows must spoil it by making belief the bottle was his peg, and wanted to take him up in a spoon.

We were all too good-humoured to quarrel, and we did have the jolliest night you ever knew.

We had more singing; and when the song hadn't any chorus we made one—a good rattling one, too—and we encored one another two or three times over, and then began again. We never had the slightest idea of breaking up, and should have gone on until the milk came round if it had not been for Tom Burrows, who, from being the larkiest fellow of the whole lot, suddenly broke down and began to cry. It was no use slapping him on the back and trying to comfort him—he would keep on crying and talking about his mother, and saying if she only knew; till it upset Bob Runamins, who wiped one of his eyes, and said he hadn't been to church for nine Sundays.

That spoiled it, you know, for Bob got worse than Tom Burrows, and would keep on saying that he meant to turn over a new leaf. Then Tom Burrows came and called him brother, and they stood and shook one another's hands, and cried into the same pocket-handkerchief; till Dick Wharton said he should go home now, and went and laid himself down under the table amongst the oyster-shells, with a big lobster-claw under the small of his back. I'm not quite sure about which way I went home, but I remember how nice and fresh the cool night air felt, and that all the policemen were walking in pairs. I mention that last, you know, lest you should think that I was in the slightest degree overcome. In fact when I dropped my umbrella, and then when my hat fell off, as I stooped to pick it up, I remember what I said to the pair of policemen who were civil enough to pick them up; and we chatted so that they walked home beside me; and, as I'd got thick gloves on, they felt in my waistcoat-pocket for me, and got out my latch-key and opened the door. Just to show you that I was perfectly correct, I'll mention what the pair of policemen said, and that was—"Of course you can find your way upstairs, sir?" And they wouldn't have said that if I had been in that reprehensible state in which some young men return home from a bachelor's party. Ah! I recollect everything perfectly. How they had left no candlestick for me in the proper place, and how something was left in the passage for me to stumble over; and then the rug at the foot of the stairs was rucked up, and two stair-ropes loose, so that three times over I was nearly stumbling up the stairs. "There's a light in my room," I remember saying. And that accounted, of course, for there being no candle left in the passage. So I smiled to myself as I paused for a moment on the landing, and tried to hum over the chorus of "Rambling Dan," just to amuse my landlady, and to let her know that I was back safe. But I was so out of breath that I forgot it, and turning the handle with my left hand—my left hand because I held my umbrella in my right—I walked in.

You see, I am so particular about all these

little facts that it shows you I could not have dreamed or imagined what I saw. For there, with my camphine lamp on the table, the bottle of brandy and a jug of hot water, sat two skeletons in the easy chairs, one on each side of the fire. One of them was sitting looking at the fire, and evidently musing; his right elbow rested on the table, and with his left hand he held a long clay pipe between his teeth, and puffed out a cloud of smoke. The other seemed in a rollicking frame of mind as well as body, or rather bones, for he sat with his legs crossed and hanging on the arm of the easy-chair; one of my cigars was between his teeth, alight, and he held up a glass of steaming brandy and water, as if about to drink my health, nodding at me as I came in.

I was not frightened, not a bit of it; for I'd known those skeletons for the last two years. They lived, when at home, in the second case on the right-hand side as you went into the museum at Fawkes's, but how it was that they had taken it into their heads—skulls, I mean—to come out and visit me, was a puzzler. So I stood looking at them, when the rollicking one actually began to chant between his teeth—and, mind you, without dropping his cigar—the chorus of "Rambling Dan," finishing off by clanking his bony legs together, his phalanges rattling like castanets.

"Your health, old fellow," he said then. And removing his cigar, he drank a hearty draught of brandy and water.

I wasn't frightened; and I was perfectly clear in the head, I tell you; for I was so surprised then, that I remember looking down into the easy-chair to see if there was a pool of brandy and water trickling down through the empty ribs.

But, no—I could see the sacrum and the upper bones of the pelvis, and they were quite dry.

"Absorbed, my boy, absorbed," he said laughing; and it was a strange, harsh laugh. "Now, then, Rattler, have a drink of this," he said to his bony *vis-à-vis*.

But the other skeleton only nodded his head slowly twice, and went on smoking, the wreaths curling up towards the ceiling.

"Shut the door, old fellow," said the rollicking skeleton to me. "I don't want rheumatism in my bones, if you do in yours. That's right," he continued, as I complied. "Now come and sit down, and I'll give you a lecture on osteology; for you're horribly shaky about your bones."

"Who told you?" I said, determined to keep a bold face on the matter.

"I heard old Bogus abuse your articulation paper, and tell you that you'd put the patella in the wrong place. H! ha! ha! we hear a good deal, don't we, Rattler?"

The other skeleton nodded its head slowly again; and this solemn, slow movement did give me something of a chill. As for the rollicking fellow, I didn't mind him a bit; and to show him

that I didn't I spirked him with the ferule of my umbrella in the same way that Rummins did Tom Burrows when he was standing on his head.

"I say!" he said, "don't do that."

"Why not?" I said, "What do you mean by coming and taking possession of a fellow's room?"

"S'pose I'd got my thoracic viscera with me, and you'd abraded the surface of my lungs, or scratched my pleura; you wouldn't have liked it, I know."

"Well, perhaps not;" I said, "but anyhow, I wish you'd go."

"Don't hurry us," he said, "we don't often get a night out. Mix yourself a glass."

I did so, and lit a clay pipe. But I didn't care for it; so I lit a cigar, and sat smoking, and looked at them.

"That's good brandy," said the rollicking skeleton, after another draught. "I say, what do you think I died of?"

"Hung for burglary, I should say, or entering people's houses in their absence."

"Get out," he said, "I had d.t. horrible; take care of yourself—don't you."

"Not if I can help it," I said.

And then I started, for Rattler had gone.

Now, I didn't see him go, and I know he didn't pass my chair. But he was gone, and there was an end of it.

"It's a curious life, mine," said the rollicking skeleton, "wired together as I am. I'm glad of a change. A case-bottle's all very well, but a glass-case is too much of a good thing."

Then he leaned over towards me, in a curious sneering fashion, laughing with his feet, if I may so express the way in which he made them quiver; and he annoyed me so that I said to him at last:

"Pray keep still."

"I would," he said; "but it's time to get up."

He rose from the chair and walked into the wall, straight in, without a pause; and somehow those words of his made such an impression on me that they seemed to hang in the air, and they were the first I heard later on in the morning, when my hot water was brought to the door.

Ah! you may say what you like, but if it's possible for two skeletons to get out of a case and come down several streets in the dead of night, and visit a medical student, those two visited me.

GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

By permission of the Author.

THE TEARFUL CORNET.

TO-DAY, arresting the passers' feet,
A cornet I heard in the hurrying street.

Common the cornet and man that played it,
What was it so telling and plaintive made it?

I couldn't get from it—what could be its spell?
There was one, I knew; that I could but feel well.

Often I'd heard our Koenig play,
But never the cornet before to-day.

Strange was its charm, it must be confessed;
Whence was its power you'd little have guessed.

The player was one not worth a rap,
With a broken hat and a coat with no nap,

Out at the elbows, with shoes that let
Out his bare toes, and, in, the wet.

Wrinkled and old, too aged by half
To be standing for pence amid jeer and laugh:

Though many I saw, to my elbows nigh,
Thought little of laughter, as moved as I.

What could the cause be that all of us made
Not able to stir while that tune he played?

'Twas a common street-air I shouldn't have lingered,
Except I'd been forced, to hear uttered or finger'd.

One—why, a month past, each urchin had humm'd it,
No organ but ground it, no scraper but strumm'd it.

And yet as it swelled now, and died through my ears,
My heart it beat to it and praised it with tears.

You'll think me maudlin; I wasn't a fool
To let that cornet my feelings rule;

For the powers that ruled in that cornet's breath
Were not age and want, but misery and death.

Away in a dirty lane of the town,
A close court where never the sun comes down;

Up reeking stairs, if you'll pick your way,
You'll come to a garret so high, there's day.

Next, to your wonder, cleanly though bare,
Though with half of a table and hardly a chair;

Though the rusty grate seems little to know
Of coals, and the cupboard no bread can show;

Yet the room is furnished, as better ones are,
In city and country, aye, near and afar.

For a silence is there that is hushing your breath,
And throned, on a bed in the corner, is Death.

The sunshine seems dim and the day full of awe,
As it touches with reverence that old bed of straw;

And the withered face on it, with hair thin and grey,
To pay for whose coffin that cornet must play.

Yes: to pay dues to death for his aged old wife,
That cornet is suing for pence there to life.

Who wonders—not I—my heart to it beat,
When grief and love played it afar in the street?

Who wonders—not I—I never had known
A cornet like that for tears in its tone!

That I felt in its music a terrible sense
Of a something beyond a mere playing for pence!

The heart it was played it—the heart it was
heard it,
And therefore it was that old wretched breath
stirred it.

God send that few players may play so well
The cornet such grief and such want to tell;

That the ears of few passers be startled again
By a cornet that grief plays, a coffin to gain.

W. C. BENNETT.

By permission of the Author.

GEORGE LEE.

"CHIVALRY is dead among us!"

So sigh those who read the tale
Of Arthur and his Knights. They wrong us.

Not alone to knights in mail
Does that noble self-disdain,
That reck's not peril, strife, and pain,
In succour of the oppressed, pertain.

There are now, too, lives sublime,
Heroes (let us thank God for it!)

Whose bright deeds, from time to time,

Cast a glow on these our days—

Some like beacons from a turret,
Some upholding lordly ways.

Listen, while I tell the story
Of a humble man, George Lee,

Who, in life unknown to glory,
Will in death remembered be,

By the men 'mong whom he died,
Their example and their pride.

"FIRE, FIRE, FIRE!"

That dread cry in dead of night
Rouses the sleepers with affright,
Adown the narrow squalid street;
And while men tumble to their feet,
And snatch their earnings up with oaths,
Wives clasp their babes and tattered clothes,
And all run out into the ways,
On which the lurid firelight plays.
The faces of that crowd show plain
Starvation, misery, and pain;
Strange that to this sad life they cling
As much as placid priest, or king
Upon his throne may do! Along

The street, from every open door
And court and alley, fresh streams pour,
To swell the dense excited throng.

The cry is "Water!" now. Below
The doomed house press the serrated ranks,

And pass the buckets from the tanks;
While the bewildered inmates throw

All they can into the street.
The crowd screams out, "Come down! A sheet

Of flame is rising, and the smoke
Grows dense! Come down before it choke

Your breath!" "Where are the engines? See!
It spreads! God help us! Not alone

This house; the entire street will be
Ablaze if they are long delayed!

There's ne'er a hope for us but one
The fire-brigade, the fire-brigade!"

Hark!—God be thanked!—at last! D'you hear
That distant roar that grows more near?

"Fire! FIRE! FIRE!" as on they tear
Down the close streets; for dear life rushing,

Like a coal-black steed that is spurred to
death—

To right, to left, the people crushing—
Sending sparks from its fiery breath,

The engine comes panting. Its riders draw up
Where the flames, now mounting to heaven,
glow

On the pavement of human heads below,
And water is poured as into a cup,

On the seething walls and molten glass;
And a smoke, as of hell, sweeps over all.

They have set the escape against the wall:

"There's never a soul there, mates!" cries Lee,
The fireman (he who, three days hence,

With his strong right arm for competence,
Shall wed the girl he has loved from a boy—

Gallant George Lee, his comrades' joy).

"No soul within?" The crowd cries, "None!"
But e'en while they answer one halloo, "See,

There's a woman up there, in the topmost
room!"

Yes, at an open window, alone,
Looming out black against the glare,
Stands a shadow of hopeless, dull, despair,
With folded hands, foreseeing her doom—
She is face to face with death.

One minute

Lee looks at her and the escape, no more;
Then through the smoke that blinds the door

He springs over burning stair and floor,

Up to the roof, if he can but win it!
With tight-clenched lips that breathe no word,

Scorched and blinded, yet undeterred,

He struggles on. From below, men, seeing
The whole house now is one blazing stack,

Cry out, "It's never n^o use! Come back!"
But what is peril to sight or limb,

If the life of a hapless human being
Has yet a chance to be saved by him?

So through the fumes that now oppress him,

Fainting, falling, he beats his way
To the room where the woman stands at bay,
With the flames, like bloodhounds, licking the
edge

Of the window. They cry, "He's safe! God bless
him!"

... Is he safe? He has reached her, seized
her, stands

With her form in his arms on the parapet-
ledge.

Men hold their breath; the sight appals
The stoutest hearts, for he reels; his hands
Cannot reach the escape. "O God in heaven,
Let him not die!" That prayer is given
With all men's hearts. He grasps a cleft
In the burning bricks, with just strength left

To save the woman, and then he falls!
A scream of horror runs down the street:
George Lee lies dead at the people's feet!

Children, ere you sleep to-night

In your cots secure from fear,
Think of those brave men who fight
For your lives when peril's near.

Other soldiers war with men:

These with fire,—a lowlier trade—
For their fellow-citizen,

Fight the fight of their brigade.
At your nursery window sill

Stand, and think, ere lying down,
When the lonely streets are still,

How they guard the sleeping town.

Children, ask not of your Father

Honour, glory, length of days;
There is something I had rather
You possessed, worth more than praise
Of men or worldly profit. Ask

For heart of grace and strength of will
To be true heroes, and fulfil

Like this man, each his daily task;
Living for others—dying too

Without a murmur, if need be.

Bear him in mind: I breathe for you
No better hope—be like George Lee!

HAMILTON AYDÉ.

By permission of the Author.

*THE MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY'S CONCERT.

THERE was going to be a grand concert at the
Mutual Improvement Society that had its period-
icals of Sprouts; and as the members were to sing
themselves in addition to the professionals, and
Tom sold the tickets and hung the bills in his win-
dow, he felt bound to go. So after tea, off they
all went, Bessy and Christopher, and Mr. and
Mrs. Chirpey, in full dress, and got there just as

it began, in Professor Fandago's Assembly Rooms,
where the society met on the off-nights of the balls.
It was commenced by a young man dressed in
black, without a shirt collar, and having much the
appearance, as Mr. Chirpey remarked, of an under-
taker's apprentice; which cheerful line of life one
would hardly have supposed that the jolly man
knew anything at all about. It commenced by
this young man striding into the concert-room,
seizing a music-stool, and, just as all expected to
see him commence some operation in the uphol-
stery line, sitting down to the piano, and com-
mencing a song.

Such a song too! It was called "The Dream
of the Reveller," and described how, when some
foreign nobleman gave a party, he was horrified at
discovering amongst his guests a skeleton, who, to
make him more lively and festive in his appearance,
was represented as adorned with "mildewed and
rotten hair." It was quite awful, and, as Bessy
said, made her creep all over. The skeleton, how-
ever, appeared to have behaved himself rather con-
vivially than otherwise, for he drank a large goblet
of wine, although anatomists would have wondered
where the skeleton could have disposed of it; for
if he had swallowed it, it must have come splashing
through his ribs and pelvis on to the floor. But,
as Tom sensibly observed, very probably it all got
into his head, which large goblets of wine are apt
to do.

Then a young lady sang "Come Dwell with Me,"
but the invitation was given in such a low, nervous
tone as to be what the newspapers call quite in-
audible from the gallery. And Sprouts said he
shouldn't have seemed to care much about accept-
ing it; and Bessy looked at the young lady, and
said wickedly she was sure he would; upon which,
from a sudden start, Sprouts is supposed to have
pinched her, for she cried, very softly though,
"Oh! now, pray, don't, Tom!" and Mr. Chirpey
said, very quietly, "Turn him out!" And then the
gaunt young man, who was called in the pro-
gramme Mr. Tombs, obliged the company again.

His next song—for he was the great gun of the
amateurs, and was never got rid of by hearing only
once—was something about a maniac. And certainly
he gave a very good idea of a maniacal state of
mind in his pianoforte accompaniment, for he
banged the notes high and low, and broke the
strings, and worked the pedals at such an excited
and ferocious state that one could hear no words
except the burden:

"No, by heaven!—no, by heaven!!

I am not mad!!!"

At the last verse though, he changed his opinion,
and declared that somebody had driven him mad.
The audience appeared to believe neither of his
assertions; and to think that, insane as he must
have been to have attempted such a song, the
earliest symptom of returning reason was evinced
by his concluding it.

They applauded very much, though; and so did Mr. Chirpey, with his stick; after which he said he would recommend Mr. Tombs to publish his songs in one volume, if he had any more like them, feeling assured that they would be very popular amongst gravediggers, and that no family—he meant no family vault, Tom whispered to Bessy—should be without a copy.

Next came two lady pupils of Herr Fireverkst, who directed the concert; and Bessy felt great interest in them, because, as she whispered to Mrs. Chirpey, she had made one of their dresses. The duet put down for them in the bills was "I Know a Bank," upon which Tom said to Bessy, so did he, and he had some money in it too—put in every Monday evening, from seven till nine, in sums not exceeding half-a-crown. And this was thought so excellent a joke that it was passed round to the party. Then another gentleman sang "The White Squall," which Mr. Chirpey thought he imitated very well; and when he came to the end, and shouted something about the bark being gulped by an ocean wave, he worked upon the feelings of the audience so that they encored him, upon which he gave them, "The Return of the Admiral." In this there was a line about its being so dark that they could see nothing but a whistle and a plunge, which Mr. Chirpey could not make out at all, and said they might as well talk about hearing the moonlight; and Bessy agreed with him, until Tom told her it was what was called "poetic licence," upon which she felt quite satisfied.

The amateur portion of the concert being over, the talented professionals now began, Herr Fireverkst sitting down to perform the overture to "Semiramide," with variations; and as this will take some time, from the "*tum, tum, tum, tum, tumity tum!*" of the commencement to the end, we will fill up the period by speculations on the performer.

Herr Fireverkst was a professor of the pianoforte. Similar professors are not persons whose talents have been crowned by that title by any learned assembly: they give themselves their own degree, and print "Professor" on their cards, for the sufficient reason that they profess to play on an instrument. On the same principle, Mrs. Twigs, the mangling-woman, who lived next door to Tom in the court, was a professor, because she professed to use Baker's Patent Mangle, although all the time she well knew that she didn't.

Herr Fireverkst had great powers of execution. Everybody who lived in the same street knew it, for he had a great love of playing with open windows, so that on fine evenings the very cab-horses were startled with his bursts of brilliancy; and, at all times, strange rumblings, like thunder shut up in a drum, pervaded the thoroughfare. He had been known to play the overture to "Figaro" right through in half a minute, in that style of playing known as Macadamised music; and when

he appeared at a concert he never looked at the audience, but sat down, played whatever he liked, and then walked out, with a look that plainly said, "*There!* if you don't like *that*, you're a set of tasteless wretches; and if you do, I won't play it again!" Herr Fireverkst made a point of never playing in private when he thought any one wanted to hear him; but he appeared to delight in voluntarily beginning interminable pieces of his own composition, where he knew they could not be appreciated, and would only prove an annoyance.

He also wore mighty moustaches, in common with most of his brethren. With all deference to their taste, it certainly seems strange when a man with his head dressed in the style of a brigand, an ancient gladiator, or an officer of the old Imperial Guard, enters a concert-room and coolly sits down to play soft accompaniments to other people's songs. It is true he may put a little character into the affair by scowling ferociously at everybody, but as nobody notices him much during the progress of the ballad, even this must become tedious at last. And it is no doubt to remedy this that several professors have invented remarkable styles of dressing their heads, so peculiarly their own that they must be the chief objects of observation wherever they may be and however long they may remain. Some wear their hair long with the ends turned outwardly away from the neck, some roll them under, and some leave the disposition of the ends to fate or circumstances. Some wear moustaches and spectacles; some moustaches and no whiskers; some shave their faces, leaving only a tuft, not on the chin, but under it; some crop their hair quite close and never shave at all; whilst the rest form moustaches, hair, and spectacles in such a variety of combinations as to defy enumeration. Indeed, when we hear now at the present day that the grotesque griffin heads which adorn the Gothic work of the New Hall, Lincoln's Inn, are said to be modelled closely from celebrated professors of the pianoforte, we believe it to be true.

All this, however, went capitally with the members of the Mutual Improvement Society. The committee had the highest opinion of Herr Fireverkst, and were proud to take a glass of Marsala and a mixed biscuit with him behind the screen which formed the green-room at the concerts, but the private apartment in which Professor Fandago's pupils changed their boots for pumps when the passage was full on Assembly nights. And when he concluded, the applause was loud and continued, Mr. Chirpey confessing that he couldn't do that—no, not if anybody gave him a thousand pounds. Upon which Sprouts told him that whilst anybody could secure the Herr's services for five, the offer was not very likely to be made, which Bessy said was so like Tom, she never knew such a fellow.

The concert commenced again, cutting short the conversation; and when it finished—which it did,

with a laughing *trio*, so comical that all the audience began to laugh too, and it was at one time thought that Mr. Chirpey would never have recovered it—when it was over, the jolly man insisted upon them all going back to his house to supper.

ALBERT SMITH.

From "*Christopher Tadpole*," by permission of
Messrs. WARD, LOCK, BOWDEN & Co.

LOVE'S PRESAGE.

I.

SHE stood and watched the driving rain
That dripped along the upper eaves,
And slid athwart the window-pane,
And pattered through the laurel leaves;
She saw the brook a river grown,
A brook the gutter; by the pond
The wind had laid the rushes prone,
And all was desolate beyond.
She said: "Tis nigh
Our meeting-hour,
Though seas run high,
And storm-clouds lower."

The wind amid the pine-trees roared,
And round the solid chimney-stack,
Behind the gaping wainscot-board,
It shrieked for joy to find a crack,
And shook the door with sudden jolt,
And backward swept with lessening din,
Then wrenched the lattice, burst the bolt,
As it would force an entrance in.
"Yet would I go!"
Was still her cry,
"Though light be low,
Or wind be high!"

"Dear Love," they said, and answered soft,
As she had been a sickly child,
"You cannot see a copse or croft
For blinding rain that driveth wild;
You cannot hear a human call
Three paces from the open door,
Then wait—the hurricane will fall
And sunshine light the way once more."
She said: "Dear friends,
Ye do not know;
'Tis Wilfrid sends,
And I would go.

"If I should wait until the gale
Sink to the sobbing of a child,
If I should wait till rain and hail
To clearer skies are reconciled,
'Twere all as one I did not hear,
'Twere all as one I did not see,
'Twere all as one his presence near
Had never passed to summon me.

You would not will
That I should fail"
(She shuddered chill)
"For gloom or gale?"

"Nay, tell me not 'tis five years back
He went away—that all engrossed
He followed still the explorer's track,
And some there be who count him lost,
And some there be who doubt his faith,
And some there be who deem him dead;
For I have seen him—not his wraith,
He liveth and he comes," she said.
"Though winds be high,
And tides be low,
And I should die,
Yet would I go!

"Dear father! 'tis no fancy's freak,
Nor am I mad, nor am I wrong,
Nor would I have you judge me weak,
For Love and Faith have made me strong;
And so I brave this tempest's rush,
And surely, surely shall we greet;
But so I bide the after-hush,
So surely shall we never meet!
It is not I
That doometh this,
Nor know I why—
Yet so it is!"

Her father blessed her where she stood,
Her mother kissed her, weeping wild,
Her sister said: "For ill or good
We may not cross her thus beguiled;
So be she fancy Wilfrid call,
She will not die if she remain,
Nor would I dare in spite of all,
To counsel we had best detain.
The storm unspent?
Nay, mother mine,
'Twere best she went—
She will but pine!

"Go, little sister, as you list,
Go, meet your Wilfrid by the sea,
And when you two again have kissed,
Return with him to home and me.
God have you in His keeping, Sweet,
And grant your faith be more than proved,
Aye! give you something more complete
Than crowns the bliss of most beloved!"
The sun declined
With ne'er a glow,—
Wild wailed the wind,
Now loud, now low.

II.

There was a ship lay labouring on the sea—
There stood a crowd of watchers on the shore,
And ever and anon all tremblingly
They might discern the pleading rocket soar.

Yet scarcely this; a dense and driving rain
With clouds above, below with billows blent
Like one vast curtain stretched from sky to main,
And in its folds the struggling ship was pent.

They could not tell what build the vessel was,
They could not tell the colours that she bore,
And who might dare to risk in such a cause
For lives already lost, another score?

'Tis easy talking! But when seas run high,
And skies are black and western winds are
loose,
And boats are less than cockle-shells, to try
Is simply courting death—and where's the
use?

I do not know: and yet I feel *some* good
Is born of every effort to be brave,
Though wisdom judge it all misunderstood,
And though it lay the struggler in the grave.

Some good is born. One watcher deemed it so,
Who scanned the storm apart a little space,
Else wherefore did she cry, "Will no one go?
Leave prudence and put pity in its place!"

I do not think she thought of Wilfrid then,
Nor did she dwell on wherefore she was there;
Her soul was centred on those drowning men,
And all her pity given to their despair.

"Have ye no boats?" she cried, "nor any oars?
Nor any men with stalwart arms to row?
Nor any pity in those hearts of yours?
I would I were a man, for I would go!"

"Aye! I would go! 'Twere shame they should
believe
Not one would stretch a helping hand, not one!
And if ye save, what sweeter thing to achieve—
And if ye fail, a noble deed is done."

And thus they caught her spirit, and they sped
To set a boat a-battling with the sea;
For all they knew those were as good as dead
They strove to save, and they as much might be.

And all her soul in following them was spent;
She had no thought of Wilfrid—where was he?
No thought of her strange summons—what it
meant—

Or why he did not meet her by the sea.

But her strong soul was 'prisoned in a frame
Too weak to hold it, and this yearning brake
The fragile outworks—and the vital flame
Sped forth a limitless career to take.

And thus she died, still watching on the cliff,
While every man aboard that ship went down,
And on the calmer morrow, stark and stiff,
Upon the beach was Wilfrid's body thrown.

III.

The gale was hushed with sudden calm,
And hushed was her sweet voice no less;
The closed eye, the folded palm
Showed she was past or storm or stress.
They stood beside the silent clay,
And wept—as human hearts must weep
When treasured lives are taken away
To leave us counterfeited sleep.
For parents stricken
Thus bereft,
No grief can quicken
What is left!

White violets on her head they set,
And hiaes white upon her breast,
And lilies where her fingers met,
And bore her body to its rest;
And where a white syringa flowered,
And where white daisies soon would grow,
And white horse-chestnut blooms down-showered
All tenderly they laid her low.
Serene the sky,
The wind was hushed,
And far and nigh
The sunlight flushed.

That grave is grown a garden now,
And in its midst there stands a cross,
A cross of marble white as snow,
To tell her gain and others' loss;
To tell how two were strong in faith,
And lovely in their lives were they,
And undivided in their death.

"God gave, and He hath taken away!"
O power of hope
And purity!
For all their scope—
Eternity!

H. L. CHILDE-PEMBERTON

From "*In a Tuscan Villa*"
By permission of the Author.

ROUND THE BIVOUAC FIRE.

ROUND the bivouac fire at midnight lay the weary
warrior-band,
Bloody were their spears with slaughter, gory was
each hero's hand;
For the ghastly fight was ended, from each soul a
whisper came:
"God of Battles! we have triumphed; hallowed
be Thy Mighty Name!"

It was beautiful at midnight when the bloody war
was done,
When the battle clashed no longer, and no longer
blazed the sun;

Calmly, in the balmy starlight, to repose out-
wearied limbs,
Not a sound to stir the stillness, save the sound of
holy hymns.

"Thou hast given us the glory! Thou hast cast
our foes to shame!
God of Battles! we have triumphed; hallowed be
Thy Mighty Name!
Thou hast given us the glory, Thou hast bade our
troubles cease,
Thou art great as God of Battles! Thou art best
as God of Peace!"

Peaceful was the world around them, in the peace-
ful summer skies
Watched the sentry-stars above them like the host
of angel-eyes;
Shone the sentinel-stars in splendour on each
slumbering hero's head,
And the moonlight gleamed in glory on the dying
and the dead.

Rosily wore the night to morning, cheerily at
their hearts' desire
Sang the soldiers songs of triumph round the
ruddy bivouac fire;
Flushed their faces were with glory; strong were
they and brave and tall,
But the tender cares of childhood bathed the
bravest face of all.

Pensive by the gleaming firelight mute the lonely
warrior stood,
In his hand a paper grasped he, scrawled with
letters large and crude;
In his gory hands he grasped it, and the tender
chilly tear,
From his manly bosom welling, bathed the blood
upon his spear.

Silent wore the night to morning, silent at their
hearts' desire,
Watching, lay the weary warriors round the
gleaming bivouac fire.
"What's the news from England, comrade?
What's the sorry news for thee?
From the friends we've left behind us, and our
home beyond the sea?"

Then the gory paper open'd he, scrawled with letters
crude and wild,
"Little news from England, comrades; 'tis a letter
from my child."
"From our merry babes in England, welcome is
the news!" they said.
And the soldiers lay in silence while the warrior
rose and read:

"Oh, my father! what has kept you? you are
nigh three years away;
It was snow-time when you left us: it was morn
o' New Year's Day.

'Good-bye, baby, until summer or till Christmas-
time,' you said.
Oh, my father! what has kept you? Summer,
Christmas, twice have fled.

"Mother says your war is holy—that you bear a
noble name—
That you fight for God and Honour, and to shield
our home from shame.
But I often hear her praying, 'Make all war, O
God, to cease;
Thou art great as God of Battles; Thou art best
as God of Peace!'

"Night and morn I pray for father; in the sunny
morning hours
I am often in the garden; I have sown your name
in flowers!
Like your coat, in flowers of scarlet—all in tulips
—soldier-red:
Come before the flowers are faded; come before
your name is dead!

"Little brother died at Christmas; mother told
me not to tell,
But I think it's better, father, for you said 'The
dead are well.'
He was buried side o' Mary—mother since has
never smiled.
Till we meet, good-bye, dear father—from your
little, loving child!"

Silent wore the night to morning, silent at their
souls' desire,
Lay the warriors—lost in dreaming—round the
dying bivouac fire.
Home were they, once more, in England; miles
were they from war's alarms!
Hark the sudden bugle sounding! Hark! the cry,
"To arms! to arms!"

Out from ambush, out from thicket, charged the
foemen through the plain!
"Up, my warriors! arm, my heroes! Strike for
God and home again!
For our homes, our babes, our country!" And
the ruddy morning light
Flared on brandished falchions bloody still with
gore of yesternight!

Purple grew the plain with slaughter—steed and
rider, side by side,
And the crimson day of carnage in a crimson sun-
set died;
Shuddering on the field of battle glimpsed the
starlight overhead,
And the moonlight, ghost-like, glimmered on the
dying and the dead!

Faint and few, around the firelight, were the
stretched and wearied limbs,
Faint and few the hero-voices that uprose in holy
hymns;

Few the warriors left to whisper, "Thou hast cast
our foes to shame!"

God of Battles! we have triumphed! Hallowed
be Thy Mighty Name!"

On the purple plain of slaughter, who is this that
smiles in rest?

With a shred of gory paper lying on his mangled
breast?

Nought remaining save a fragment scrawled with
letters crude and wild,

"Till we meet, good-bye, dear father—from your
little, loving child!"

Raise him softly, lift him gently, staunch his life-
blood, ebbing slow;

He is breathing! he is whispering! what is this
he murmurs low?

"Saved! My child! My home! My country!
Father, give my pangs release:

Thou art great as God of Battles; Thou art best
as God of Peace!"

SAMUEL K. COWAN, M.A.

By permission of the Author.

A TALE OF WONDER.

ONCE upon a time there was an old woman who
lived in a village not far off, and who went to
market to buy a sack of beans. Now, she had to
walk back ten miles over a dreary common; a long
step at most times, but a terrible pull when one
has a sack of beans on one's back. It was night
before she got halfway, and the moon was hid, and
the snow was falling, and the old woman was
ready to drop; she was tired and hungry, so she
was right glad when she came to a house, which,
though an ugly-looking place at the best, she
thought quite good enough for her to rest in.

She took out a penny, and asked for a bed, and
the woman of the house let her go into the loft,
where she slept on her sack of beans.

Now, the house belonged to thieves; and this
was one of their wives who let the woman in with
her sack.

But, though the old woman was so tired, she
could not sleep, but lay tossing about on her straw
quite uneasy; presently she saw a light in the
room below, and two men, each with a knife and a
lantern.

And she felt desperately frightened, as you may
fancy, for she thought they might want to murder
her, and then eat her; which was often done in
those days, when there were a great many ogres
and giants.

Well, the two men with the knives went on
till they came to a bed where a gentleman was
sleeping, who had been overtaken like the old
woman, and who had got with him a large port-

manteau; there he lay as sound as possible,
snoring away in a manner quite pleasant to hear.
As soon as the two rogues saw how fast asleep he
was, the biggest took hold of his legs, and the little
one took out his knife, and cut the gentleman's
throat—*slice!*—at one gash.

As soon as they had stuck him they left him
there all bloody, took the portmanteau, and went
away again downstairs. The old woman with the
sack became mighty uneasy, thinking that it was
to be her turn next, and that it was all over with
her for certain; whereas Heaven had sent her
there on purpose to detect and punish these wicked
men. As soon as they got downstairs, the woman
must have told them of the poor old creature in
the loft, for presently up they came again, knives
and lanterns and all.

The poor old body was terribly frightened, as
you may think, especially when the big man took
hold of her legs (as he had done below-stairs), and
the little one came up to her head, with his lantern
and his long knife.

However, she did not move a muscle, only she
snored to make believe she was asleep.

"Let's leave her," says the big man; "she's
asleep and can tell no tales."

"Let's kill her," says the little man, "she'll do
to feed the pigs!"

All this while the old woman lay as still as a
stone; and at last, as they did not suspect that
she was awake, they let her off, and went down-
stairs. So she escaped like a brave old woman as
she was. She saw them wrap up the dead man
below in his sheet and carry him to the courtyard;
presently they called the pigs, and up they came,
grunting and sniffing round the trough, which was
the coffin that these wicked monsters gave the poor
murdered gentleman.

You may suppose that she did not sleep much
that night; but the next morning, as soon as it
was light, she thanked the woman of the house,
took up her sack, and set off home as though
nothing had happened; trudging over the common
as fast as her poor legs would carry her, though
that was not very fast, she trembled so. Now, the
little man (he that had stuck the gentleman) sus-
pected that all was not right, and he followed her,
and came up with her before she had got a mile on
the road. As soon as she saw him coming, the bold
old lady puts down her sack, and sits waiting for
him on a stone.

"What's the matter, missus?" says he.

"Why, my sack is heavy, and my old legs is
rather weak; I wish some honest man would
give me an arm, and help me on my road a
bit."

So the little fellow gave her his arm; and there
they went across the common, talking about beans,
and the weather, and what not, as if they had been
two angels. He saw her almost home; and you
may be sure that when she got there she fell down

on her knees and said her prayers—as well she might, after getting off so well.

While she was in the middle of her prayers, in comes her husband; and as soon as she'd done, he asked for a bit of bacon and some of the beans; so she cut a large piece, and plenty of beans. While it was boiling she told her husband of all she had seen the night before.

"I must go to the Justice," says she, "and tell him the whole story."

"Go to the Justice?—go to the devil!" says he. "As for the gentleman, it is all over with him now, and some of these rogues' comrades will kill us if we peach."

With that he stuck his fork into the saucepan to catch hold of a bit of the bacon. Well, as sure as I'm sitting here, instead of pulling out a bit of pork, what does he find at the end of his fork but a man's head!

"It's the gentleman's head!" says the wife.

"But what can we do?" says the husband, who was rather flustered.

"You can revenge me," says the head. "Last night I was wickedly murdered, and eaten by pigs, as your wife can swear to. I shall have no rest until I see those robbers at the gallows; and what's more, I'll never leave you till then!"

So the farmer told the Justice, and the thieves were hanged, and all the pigs drowned who had eaten the gentleman's body.

"And the head?"

Why, it was buried in the field where the farmer sowed the beans, and there were never such crops known as came from that field.

"And the brave old woman?"

Why, though she was seventy years old, she had a son, and lived happy ever after.

W. M. THACKERAY.

THE PICKET.

A BELT of woodland, dark and drear, was all that lay between the camps of two contending hosts, both urged by passions keen; The one is stealing through the wood to gain a night surprise, The other sleeps, until the dawn shall summon all to rise.

But in the outskirts of the camp—the while their comrades sleep— With silent foot and weary eye their watch the pickets keep; The viper's glide—the falling leaf—doth catch their listening ear, And makes a pistol instant point, or bayonet backward rear!

One sentinel has been told off a distant spot to guard,

And there, beneath the gazing moon, he threads the tangled sward;

From out that moon perchance he sees a mother's image beam!

And converse sweet he holds with her, as in a waking dream.

Again he feels her bosom pant o'er his supporting breast,

As when she faltered forth farewell, and urged her last request:

"My boy, my darling boy, good-bye! and oh, whate'er betide,

Let duty be thy watchword still, and Heaven be thy guide!"

And as, by fancy's aid, he hears his mother's voice again,

He throws his gaze where rise the tents above the distant plain;

'Tis there in sleep his comrades draw fresh vigour for the fight—

Whilst his the duty, watch and ward to render through the night.

From time to time strikes on his ear some charger's whining cry,

And straight the picket halts and peers in brief perplexity;

Or now he wheels about with speed, and makes his weapon gleam,

Until the sound he knows to be some night-bird's sudden scream.

The moon becomes a fainter disc, the midnight hours are past,

And now his drear and anxious watch will be relieved at last:

When instantly, but how or where the picket ne'er shall know,

Three figures leap from out the gloom—O Heaven! it is the foe!

They wrench his musket from his grasp, and bind him arm to arm!

Then pause to mark the slightest sound or token of alarm;

They look in front—to right and left—and scarcely draw their breath,

No,—naught betrayed their daring raid, but all was still as death!

Two gripped him by his tethered arms, the other grasped his coat,

Whilst each did prick his sabre's point against the picket's throat!

As cold and pale hath turned his cheek as is his whitened glove,

And one brief while his eyes are raised where beams the moon above.

The picket's mind is now resolved ! that life he will not save
By act disloyal which a leal and honest mother gave ;
That life was tended to his Queen, and to his country given,
His soul is all his own, and knows no other power but Heaven !

Before his feet have stirred a step, he smiles away his fear,
And shouts aloud the cry, " O lads ! the enemy is here ! "

The picket's head was severed there ; his soul took up its flight :

A son was lost, a banner saved, a hero made that night ! HENRY J. BARKER, M.A.

From "*Lisla Ridley, the Pitman.*"

By permission of MESSRS. JARROLD & SONS.

A DOG'S TALE.

My Aunt Jemima had a dog, a little white and woolly one ;

If one should tread upon its tail, my word how she would bully one !

It's *narrative* was covered so with hair on every joint of it,

That like the one I'm telling you, you couldn't see the point of it !

It's Pa and Ma were prize dogs ; it had the best blue blood in it.

Not satisfied with this, at dinner it got all it could in it ;

It's name was " Tiny," but its nature just was the reverse of it ;

Catarrh and chronic whooping-cough appeared to be the curse of it.

It's *nez retrousee* was of a complexion cobblers' waxen ;

It's curly locks were of a colour commonly called flaxen ;

It was a beauty, of a type emphatically comical.

One day this doggy died ; 'twas of indulgence gastronomical.

My Aunt Jemima at its death would sure have cried each eye out ;

But, being blind, she luckily had got no eyes to cry out ;

And so she cried out, " Mary Ann, my true and trusty slavey,

Pray tell me, has my darling doggy hooked it to Old Davy " ?

To please her mistress Mary knew was but her bounded duty ;

And so she said that Tiny was, just like a sleeping beauty,

Suspending animation ; which was really no misnomer,

But simply making her *full stop* into a state of *coma*.

She took the dear departed down, and in the kitchen skinned her ;

Then dried her hide, and hid it, dried as dry as any cinder.

The other part she buried deep out in the back exterior

Beneath a berry-tree, whose berries since have been superior.

At Battersea there is a home for doggies that are destitute ;

There Mary Ann proceeded all intent upon a substitute

For that beneath the berry-tree, and from her pocket ample

She brought poor Tiny's skin, and asked them, " Could they match the sample " ?

As luck would have it, all the dogs had coats both short and stubbly,

Their legs were long, their ribs were bare, their tails were thick and nubbly ;

But Mary, smiling in a way that seemed to say she'd hit it,

Extended Tiny's skin, and asked them, " Had they one to fit it " ?

They tried it on a dozen dogs, till Mary said it bored her.

The man suggested she had better get one made to order.

It would not fit a ready-made, as he did Kino's kickseys,

In width it took " eight-and-a-halves," in length it wanted " sixes,"

At length she bought a " six," and having got it to her kitchen,

She put it in poor Tiny's skin, and then began a-stitchin' !

Till it was perfectly sewn up, beyond fear of detection ;

Then to my Aunt Jemima she announced the resurrection.

It fed on fowls and drank of cream, in a manner downright sinful ;

But tho' " *sewn up* " 'twas never " *tight*," and never got a " *skin full*."

My Aunt Jemima looked upon this change with grief and loathing,

It ne'er occurred to her it was a *cur* in curly clothing.

It couldn't wag it's tail, nor could it wiggle-waggle Tiny ;

It's bark was always muffled ; and it's head askew, like mine is ;

It couldn't run with *ease*, nor yet with *she's* could it go mooning;
Which very much annoyed it, for it liked a bit of spooning.

It's skin would often get displaced, a roll was a reverser;
It's body got upon it's back, it's back got *vice versa*.

And now and then it disarranged the whole of it's head-gearing;
It's nose would poke out of it's eye, it's eye from ear be peering.

Now, *June in fur*, you *may infer*, did not put any fat on it;

Although my Aunt Jemima did one morning when she sat on it.

But in the winter, like a *swell* decked out in furry dressing,

It *swelled* so much that soon it found its *circumstances pressing*.

In heaving *sighs* about it's *size*, it burst its skin asunder;

Which filled my Aunt Jemima's mind with horror and with wonder.

But Mary Ann caught up the skin, as doggy gaily bolted,

Assuring my relation that her pretty pet had moulted.

MORAL.

When once you tell a lie, be sure you stick to what you fix upon;

And always mind that they are blind you play your tricks upon.

Remember borrowed plumes are oft a nuisance when you're in 'em;

And if your doggies get too fat, take 'em outside and "skin 'em."

WALTER BROWNE.

By permission of the Author.

MR. MONTELLIER'S RECITATION.

It was a matter of universal remark that Mr. and Mrs. Montpellier were a very united couple. It was also a matter of universal remark that Mr. Montpellier was small, and had a weak voice, while Mrs. Montpellier was large, and had a strong voice; and that Mr. Montpellier was submissive to Mrs. Montpellier, and could scarcely draw a breath without first obtaining her permission, if not even also her active assistance. Upon the whole, therefore, it might be said that if one of them was perhaps a trifle more united than the other, that one was Mrs. Montpellier; and that if either of the devoted couple ever, in an abandoned and profane moment, cherished the slightest inclination to see the other smothered, Mr. Montpellier

was the culprit into whose wicked heart that abominable thought found entrance.

The ascendancy of Mrs. Montpellier was demonstrated in many ways; but principally in a curious tendency to present Mr. Montpellier in the light of what I may term a professional animal constantly learning some new trick. And it came upon her in this way, that whatever accomplishment she saw anybody else exhibit, she immediately burned to behold Mr. Montpellier doing likewise, and gave him no rest until he went in for it. That she meant extremely well, and was guided only by the most earnest pride in him and desire for his welfare, was as unquestionable as that he suffered a considerable amount of discomfort from her restless ambition.

On one occasion the sight of an elegant rider induced in the mind of Mrs. Montpellier a firm and instant conviction that her husband was specially destined to shine in the saddle. She woke him up in the middle of the night to tell him so; and by nine o'clock on the following morning he might have been seen crouching in abject misery on the back of a hired quadruped, which displayed equal reluctance to being fondly clasped round the neck and convulsively held on to by the tail.

At another time Mrs. Montpellier, on returning from a boat-race, pictured her husband in her mind's eye as an accomplished oarsman. Within twenty-four hours Mr. Montpellier was seated in a boat with a pair of sculls, which executed every possible manoeuvre except sculling, and which finally slid from his unequal grasp one by one, and floated gently down the stream; inasmuch that he and his craft were ultimately rescued and ignominiously towed to shore.

The next thing which set Mrs. Montpellier off was a cricket match. She never paused from that moment until Mr. Montpellier was a member of the local club, and put, without trial, into the eleven elected for the very next match. Mr. Montpellier on that occasion advanced with agitated footsteps to the wicket, but he succeeded in keeping up his stumps until four balls had been bowled to him. I may mention, however, that of the three which preceded the fatal one, the first was a wide, the second hit him on the knee-cap, and the third barked his fingers.

It dawned upon Mrs. Montpellier at last that her Albert was not destined to conquer in the athletic world, and a period of comparative repose succeeded to him. But one evening they chanced to go to an entertainment of which the leading feature was a recitation. It was delivered with much spirit; so much spirit, in fact, that the performer consumed an entire bottlefull of water, and one of his shirt-studs came out and rolled to the extreme end of the platform. Mrs. Montpellier drank in every word, and walked home afterwards in a state of profound meditation; and having

kept an unbroken silence till they were in the middle of supper, she laid down her knife and fork and looked her husband triumphantly in the face.

"*Albert, you shall recite at the next Penny Reading.*"

Mr. Montpellier did not lay down his knife and fork, because they saved him the trouble by falling out of his hands in the extreme surprise of this startling announcement.

"What, me—I—what, me recite, dear?—I—I don't know anything about reciting—and I don't know anything to recite—I really couldn't do it, my dear."

"Couldn't! How could the man we heard to-night? All things must have a beginning. You must begin. You must begin at the next Penny Reading."

In vain Mr. Montpellier protested. Like a drowning kitten his cries grew fainter and fainter, until at length it was arranged to his wife's complete satisfaction, and his own unutterable misery, that he should write to the secretary of the entertainments, and volunteer to recite Tennyson's "*May Queen*." One thing he stipulated for, and begged so hard that the concession was made to him; and this was that his wife should sit by him with the book, and prompt him if he were at a loss.

He faintly hoped that his offer might be declined; but this loophole of escape was cut off by a warm acceptance; and nothing remained for him but to learn the piece. It was a case of learning it, mind you, for Mrs. Montpellier wouldn't hear of his reading from the book, and would be satisfied with nothing less than a real live recitation.

The number of solid articles of furniture to which Mr. Montpellier, while in a state of rehearsal, imparted in confidence the information that he was to be Queen of the May, was astonishing. He took a sideboard, a towel-horse, and a coal-scuttle separately into his secret, and he postured in front of the mirror in the most extraordinary attitudes.

Then there were evening rehearsals with Mrs. Montpellier, who held the book so as to preclude the possibility of cribbing, and was merciless on the subject of mistakes.

At last, in the weak, gentle voice which was naturally his own, and with a lamb-like sing-song little bleat added, to do justice to the rhythm, Mr. Montpellier could say the piece by heart at home, and was as much prepared for the sacrifice as it was possible for him to be.

A fortnight elapsed; and if ever anybody wished that he had never been born, Mr. Montpellier wished it at half-past seven o'clock on the evening of the entertainment in which he was to take a part. If anybody was so placed that a sprained ankle, a twisted tendon, an acute attack of gout, a gentle suspicion of scarlet fever, would have

been a source of deep relief, Mr. Montpellier felt himself so placed that evening.

Under any circumstances he would not have felt mirthful in the anticipation of what was before him; but as it was, he stood on the brink of a desperate undertaking—alone.

His prop, his support, his stay, his holder of an edition of Tennyson, carefully turned down at page four, had been torn from his side ruthlessly at the last moment. In milder language, Mrs. Montpellier's face had swelled from toothache to the size of a pumpkin, and she couldn't go.

Ordinarily speaking, he would have borne the irritation with philosophy, but he clung to her on this occasion with a fondness which would have been extremely touching if it had not been labelled "*May Queen*."

"*Clementina, dear, I really can't leave you this evening. I will just send an apology and remain with you instead of going there. I—I don't mind in the least not going.*"

"*Stuff, Albert—of course you must go. I can't hear of your staying away from the reading when your name is in the programme just because I have the toothache.*" Thus the Spartan Mrs. Montpellier in the muffled voice peculiar to persons with swelled faces.

"But really and truly, Clementina, I feel quite anxious about you, and I'm sure they'll be able to get on without me. And besides, you know, dear, you were going to prompt me, and I'm sure to break down if you're not there."

But in vain Mr. Montpellier pleaded: the lady was inexorable. She bade him take the book and ask some one on the platform to hold it for him, and give him the word in case of need.

At length Mr. Montpellier started off dismally, and made his way to the building. Arrived there, it became necessary to secure some friend in need who would hold on to the book and perform the office of prompter. He would have given at least one limb to read instead of recite the piece, but Mrs. Montpellier's last words to him were, "*Mind, Albert, you recite this evening, you do not read*"; and he dared not. He looked round him, and his eye lighted on an acquaintance of the name of Nubson, who was sitting just under the platform in the front row.

Mr. Montpellier made for Nubson, conveyed to him in a hollow voice the state of the case, and handed him the book with a fervent request that Nubson would prompt him when he required it.

Now it happened that of all the men to whom Mr. Montpellier could have turned in his distress this man was about the worst. For Nubson was a person with a keen and cruel sense of humour, who revelled in practical jokes, and spared the feelings of no one. And when Mr. Albert Montpellier was called on by the chairman to recite the "*May Queen*," there was a very suspicious twinkle in the Nubsonian eye.

With a courage principally composed of despair, aided by a tincture of comfort derived from the spectacle of Nubson sitting just in front with the open book, Mr. Montpellier came forward: that is to say, he first tripped up the stairs leading to the platform, he then tripped over the feet of four gentlemen who were sitting on it, and thus reached the scaffold. His composure was not augmented by the circumstance that when, in his shrinking modesty, he stood as far back as possible, he became immediately conscious of a smell of burning and a noise of frizzling, and discovered from a sudden access of heat in the neighbourhood of his left ear that he had put his hair into a gas-jet which protruded from the wall.

He had arranged with Mrs. Montpellier to commence by announcing that he was about to venture the "May Queen," a poem by Mr. Alfred Tennyson, the Poet Laureate. What he said when the crucial point came was:

"I am going to recite the 'May Queen,' a poem by Mr. Poet Laureate, the Alfred Tennyson—I mean Mr. Tennyson—I mean he wrote it."

And having got so far, he plunged madly into

You must wake and call me early, call me early, mother dear,
To-morrow 'll be the happiest time of all the glad New Year;
Of all the glad New Year, mother, the maddest, merriest day,
For I'm-to-be-Queen-of-the-May, mother, I'm-to-be-Queen-of-the-May.

That verse went off with such a run that Nubson began to look gloomy and fear the worst, but his face cleared up when Mr. Montpellier started on
There's many a bright, bright eye they say, but none so bright as mine;
There's Margaret, and Mary, and Kate—

Nubson [*suggestively*]: "And Matilda Jane."

There's Margaret, and Mary, and Kate, and Matilda Jane,
and Caroline,
But none so fair—but none so fair—

"Say it again, it comes three times," from Nubson.

But none so fair—but none so fair—but none so fair—

[*Terrible boy at the back with a hoarse voice*]:
"Go it, governor, none so fair as oo?"

But none so fair as little Alice in all the land they say,
For I'm-to-be-Queen-of-the-May, mother, I'm-to-be-Queen-of-the-May.

Mr. Montpellier was evidently getting, in prize-fighting language, "all abroad," but he clung to the remembrance of the fact that the fourth line of every verse went in this way, and he brought it out as quickly as possible, so that it might not escape him.

I sleep so sound all night, mother, that I shall never wake
If you don't call me—call me—If you don't call me—

[*Aside, desperately*]: "Nubson!"

Nubson's face an absolute blank—that was his new mode of torture.

If you don't call me—

[*Aside*]: "Nubson!"

[*Same boy as before*]: "All right, we'll call yer Nubson—ere Nubson;" a remark followed by a roar of laughter.

Mr. Montpellier looked down in mute anguish at Nubson, who started suddenly, as if he had been buried in deep meditation, and seized the book.

"I beg your pardon ten thousand times, I really forgot;" and in his affected agitation, the scoundrel Nubson dropped the book on the floor as if by accident, picked it up, and began violently to look for the place, while Mr. Montpellier stood there a monument of wretchedness.

After a few seconds, representing to Mr. Montpellier about eighteen months, Nubson appeared to find his place and nodded to Mr. Montpellier.

"Call me, call me," murmured Mr. Montpellier.

"All right," said Nubson, and then added at a pace and in a voice which made it absolutely impossible for Mr. Montpellier to follow him: "It goes on, 'if-you-do-not-call-me-loud-when-the-day-begins-to-break-but-I-must-gather-lots-of-flowers-and-buds-and-garlands-gay-for-I'm-to-be-Queen-of-the-May, mother, I'm-to-be-Queen-of-the-May.' Now then, fire away."

That last cruel cut finished Mr. Montpellier. He looked round him wildly and saw a side-door. He made for that door.

Mrs. Montpellier walked up and down the room, swollen as to the face, and agitated as to the entire body. She looked to Albert's triumphant return at about a quarter-past ten. What ensued when he appeared, pale and trembling, at nine, and the horrid truth was gradually drawn from him, I cannot, must not, dare not relate.

EDWARD F. TURNER.

I'm "Tantler's Sister."

By permission of the Author,
and Messrs. SMITH, ELDER & CO.

BLOOD ON THE WHEEL.

"Bless her, dear little heart!" said my mate, and he pointed out to me, Fifty yards to the right, in the darkness, a light burning steady and clear. That's her signal in answer to me, when I whistle, to let me see She is at her place by the window the time I am passing here."

I turned to look, at the light, and I saw the tear on his cheek—

He was tender at heart, and I knew that his love was lasting and strong—

But he dashed it off with his hand, and I did not think fit to speak,

* But look'd right ahead through the dark, as we clank'd and thunder'd along.

They had been at the school, the two, and had run, like a single life,

Through the mazes of childhood up to the sweeter and firmer prime,

And often he told me, smiling, he had promised to make her his wife,

In the rambles they had for nuts in the woods in the golden autumn time.

"I must make," he would add, "that promise good in the course of a month or two;

And then, when I have her safe and sound in a nook of the busy town,

No use of us whistling then, Joe, lad, as now we incline to do,

For a wave of her hand, or an answering light as we thunder up and down."

Well, the marriage was settled at last, and I was to stand by his side,

Take a part in the happy rite, and pull from his hand the glove;

And still as we joked between ourselves, he would say in his manly pride,

That the very ring of the engine-wheels had something in them of love.

At length we had just one run to make before the bridal took place,

And it happened to be in the night, yet merry in heart we went on;

But long ere he came to the house, he was turning each moment his face

To catch the light by the window, placed as a beacon for him alone.

"Now then, Joe," he said, with his hand on my arm, "keep a steady look-out ahead

While I whistle for the last time;" and he whistled sharply and clear;

But no light rose up at the sound; and he looked with something like dread

On the whitewash'd walls of the cot, through the gloom looking dull, and misty, and drear.

But lo! as he turn'd to whistle again, there rose on the night a scream,

And I rush'd to the side in time to catch the flutter of something white;

Then a hitch through the engine ran like a thrill, and in haste he shut off the steam,
While we stood looking over at each other with our hearts beating wild with affright.

The station was half a mile ahead, but an age seem'd to pass away

Ere we came to a stand, and my mate, as a drunken man will reel,

Rush'd on to the front with his lamp, but to bend and come back and say,

In a whisper faint with its terror, "Joe, come and look at this blood on the wheel!"

Great heaven! a thought went through my heart like the sudden stab of a knife,

While the same dread thought seem'd to settle on him and palsy his heart and mind,

For he went up the line with the haste of one who is rushing to save a life,

And with the dread shadow of what was to be I follow'd closely behind.

What came next is indistinct, like the mist on the mountain-side,

Gleams of light and awe-struck faces, but one thing can never grow dim:

My mate, kneeling down in his grief like a child by the side of his mangled bride,

Kill'd, with the letter still in her hand she had wished to send to him.

Some little token was in it, perhaps to tell of her love and her truth,

Some little love errand to do ere the happy bridal drew nigh;

So in haste she had taken the line, but to meet, in the flush of her fair sweet youth,

The terrible death that could only be seen with a horror in heart and eye.

Speak not of human sorrow—it cannot be spoken in words—

Let us veil it as God veil'd His at the sight of His Son on the cross.

For who can reach to the height or the depth of those infinite yearning chords

Whose tones reach the very centre of heaven when swept by the fingers of loss?

She sleeps by the little ivied church in which she had bow'd to pray—

Another grave close by the side of hers, for he died of a broken heart,

Wither'd and shrunk from that awful night like the autumn leaves in decay,

And the two were together that death at first had shaken so rudely apart.

But still, when I drive through the dark, and that
 night comes back to my mind,
 I can hear the shriek take the air, and beneath
 me fancy I feel
 The engine shake and hitch on the rail, while a
 hollow voice from behind
 Cries out, till I leap on the footplate, "Joe, come
 and look at this blood on the wheel!"

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

By permission of the Author.

THE STORY OF A COASTGUARDSMAN.

They sing their songs and their lifeboat lays, and
 gossip of guest to host
 Is of wreckage wild, in the winter time, round
 the dangerous Cornish coast;
 There are plenty of yarns of the sailors, and of
 fishermen out at sea,
 There are tales of the lighthouse-keepers, and of
 women who bend the knee
 When their mates are away in the storm-time, and
 the cottage is left to the roar
 Of the hurricane lashing the surf to foam, and
 screaming about the shore;
 But best of all tales that ever I heard, to make me
 think better of men
 Who fling in their lives for duty—it happened—
 you ask me when?
 On a wonderful summer's evening, just as holiday-
 time began;
 It had for its scene old Cornwall—it's hero a
 Coastguardsman!

A party of "trippers" had ventured to visit the
 rocks and the caves,
 Where the sea-birds find their houses, and ignorant
 folks their graves;
 You may search for wild adventure on the sea-
 coast, south and north,
 But for beauty, just travel by Truro to the
 village of Perranporth.
 It was there on this summer evening, on the beach,
 as the daylight died,
 That a wandering, thoughtless fellow was caught
 at the turn of the tide;
 Up came the sea and trapped him, cutting the
 ground from his feet;
 He rushed, but he couldn't go onward—then back,
 there was no retreat!
 Up came the sea still closer—was it death? Not
 a second to count—
 Then setting his teeth at the danger, to the cliffs
 he began to mount.
 Tearing the turf and the grasses, and scaring the
 sea-bird's nest,
 Clinging with feet and fingers, and bruising his
 arms and breast;

At last, with a desperate struggle, he lifted his life
 to a stone,
 Where he held with a cry for a second, sus-
 pended in air alone!
 Once more death barred his passage; and his
 terrified face turned grey,
 For the ledge of the rock he clung to was
 crumbling slowly away!
 "Where is the man for a rescue?" so the cry
 of agony ran,
 "I am that man, God willing!" said Regan, the
 Coastguardsman!

Then followed a terrible silence, a horror that
 might be felt,
 For the village was emptied of women, who
 muttered their prayers and knelt;
 They could see the eyes of the shivering man, with
 the agonised face turned grey,
 As stone after stone, from his safety ledge, kept
 slowly crumbling away!
 "Bring me a rope," said Regan, "and bind it
 about my waist;
 Look at that wretched fellow! In a second he'll
 fall! Make haste!
 Keep the cord tight in your hands, mates—there,
 tighter so, and stiff;
 Now wait till I give the signal! then haul me over
 the cliff.
 Why do you stand there staring? I'll save him,
 lads, if I can;
 If I die, I have done my duty," said Regan, the
 Coastguardsman!
 He swooped to his prey like an eagle, as they
 lowered with bated breath,
 This man with his brave life given to a brother
 condemned to death.
 The silence grew more awful, and the agony piled
 on the lip
 Of the women and men who waited—till at last,
 with a mighty grip,
 The man of the Coastguard seized him, and
 tightened his arms around
 This prize he had risked his life for—then, search-
 ing for safety ground,
 They swung from the ledge together, for the rope
 was taut and stiff,
 Till it dragged the burdened hero to the arms of
 the crowd on the cliff!

There are times when the heart's too full, sir, for
 even our English cheers,
 But the women, they crowded around him with
 kisses, and prayers, and tears!
 So tell it about from south to north, proclaim it
 where you can;
 Go spread it forth from Perranporth—this tale of
 a Coastguardsman!

CLEMENT SCOTT.

*From "Lays of a Londoner."
 By permission of the Author.*

SCENE FROM
"LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN."*

SCENE.—*Lord Darlington's Rooms.*

LADY WINDERMERE [*standing by the fireplace*]. Why doesn't he come? This waiting is horrible. He should be here. Why is he not here, to wake by passionate words some fire within me? I am cold—cold as a loveless thing. Arthur must have read my letter by this time. If he cared for me he would have come after me, would have taken me back by force. But he doesn't care; he's entrammelled by this woman—fascinated by her—dominated by her. If a woman wants to hold a man, she has merely to appeal to what is worst in him. We make gods of men and they leave us. Others make brutes of them and they fawn and are faithful. How hideous life is! . . . Oh! it was mad of me to come here, horribly mad. And yet, which is the worst, I wonder, to be at the mercy of a man who loves one, or the wife of a man who in one's own house dishonours one? What woman knows? What woman in the whole world? But will he love me always, this man to whom I am giving my life? What do I bring him? Lips that have lost the note of joy, eyes that are blinded by tears, chill hands and icy heart. I bring him nothing. I must go back—no, I can't go back, my letter has put me in their power. Arthur would not take me back! That fatal letter! No! Lord Darlington leaves England tomorrow. I will go with him. I have no choice. [*Sits down for a few moments; then starts up and puts on her cloak.*] No, no! I will go back; let Arthur do with me what he pleases. I can't wait here. It has been madness my coming. I must go at once. As for Lord Darlington—Oh, here he is! What shall I do? What can I say to him? Will he let me go away at all? I have heard that men are brutal, horrible. . . . Oh! [*Hides her face in her hands.*]

[*Enter Mrs. ERLYNNE.*]

MRS. ERLYNNE. Lady Windermere! [*LADY WINDERMERE starts and looks up; then recoils in contempt.*] Thank Heaven I am in time. You must go back to your husband's house immediately.

LADY W. Must?

MRS. E. [*authoritatively*]. Yes, you must! There is not a second to be lost. Lord Darlington may return at any moment.

LADY W. Don't come near me!

MRS. E. Oh! You are on the brink of ruin, you are on the brink of a hideous precipice. You must leave this place at once; my carriage is waiting at the corner of the street. You must come with me and drive straight home. [*LADY WINDERMERE*

throws off her cloak and flings it on the sofa.] What are you doing?

LADY W. Mrs. Erlynne, if you had not come here, I would have gone back. But now that I see you, I feel that nothing in the whole world would induce me to live under the same roof as Lord Windermere. You fill me with horror. There is something about you that stirs the wildest rage within me. And I know why you are here. My husband sent you to lure me back that I might serve as a blind to whatever relations exist between you and him.

MRS. E. Oh! You don't think that—you can't.

LADY W. Go back to my husband, Mrs. Erlynne. He belongs to you, and not to me. I suppose he is afraid of a scandal. Men are such cowards. They outrage every law of the world, and are afraid of the world's tongue. But he had better prepare himself. He shall have a scandal. He shall have the worst scandal there has been in London for years. He shall see his name in every vile paper, mine on every hideous placard.

MRS. E. No—no—

LADY W. Yes! he shall. Had he come himself, I admit I would have gone back to the life of degradation you and he had prepared for me—I was going back—but to stay myself at home, and to send you as his messenger—oh! it was infamous—infamous.

MRS. E. [*c.*] Lady Windermere, you wrong me horribly—you wrong your husband horribly. He doesn't know you are here—he thinks you are safe in your own house. He never read the mad letter you wrote to him!

LADY W. [*r.*] Never read it!

MRS. E. No, he knows nothing about it.

LADY W. How simple you think me. [*Going to her.*] You are lying to me!

MRS. E. [*restraining herself*]. I am not. I am telling you the truth.

LADY W. If my husband didn't read my letter, how is it that you are here? Who told you I had left the house you were shameless enough to enter? Who told you where I had gone to? My husband told you, and sent you to decoy me back. [*Crosses L.*]

MRS. E. [*r. c.*] Your husband has never seen the letter. I saw it; I opened it; I read it.

LADY W. [*turning to her*]. You opened a letter of mine to my husband? You wouldn't dare!

MRS. E. Oh! to save you from the abyss into which you are falling, there is nothing in the world I would not dare, nothing in the whole world. Here is the letter. You husband has never read it. He never shall read it. [*Going to fireplace.*] It should never have been written. [*Tears it and throws it into the fire.*]

LADY W. [*with infinite contempt in her voice and look*]. How do I know that that was my letter after all? You seem to think the commonest device can take me in!

MRS. E. Oh! Why do you disbelieve everything

* The dramatic rights of this play being strictly reserved, the scene here given cannot be played in a theatre or hall licensed for stage-plays without the author's sanction.

I tell you? What object do you think I have in coming here, except to save you from utter ruin, to save you from the consequence of a hideous mistake? That letter that is burnt now *was* your letter. I swear it to you!

LADY W. [*slowly*]. You took good care to burn it before I had examined it. I cannot trust you. You, whose whole life is a lie, how could you speak the truth about anything? [*Sits down.*]

Mrs. E. [*hurriedly*]. Think as you like about me, say what you choose against me, but go back, go back to the husband you love.

LADY W. [*sullenly*]. I do not love him!

Mrs. E. You do; and you know that he loves you.

LADY W. He does not understand what love is. He understands it as little as you do—but I see what you want. It would be a great advantage for you to get me back. Dear Heaven! what a life I would have then! Living at the mercy of a woman who has neither mercy nor pity in her, a woman whom it is an infamy to meet, a degradation to know—a vile woman, a woman who comes between husband and wife!

Mrs. E. [*with a gesture of despair*]. Lady Windermere, Lady Windermere, don't say such terrible things. You don't know how terrible they are—how terrible and how unjust. Listen; you must listen. Only go back to your husband, and I promise you never to communicate with him again on any pretext—never to see him, never to have anything more to do with his life or yours. The money that he gave me he gave me not through love, but through hatred; not in worship, but in contempt. The hold I have over him—

LADY W. [*rising*]. Ah! you admit you have a hold!

Mrs. E. Yes, and I will tell you what it is. It is his love for you, Lady Windermere.

LADY W. You expect me to believe that?

Mrs. E. You must believe it. It is true. It is his love for you that has made him submit to—oh! call it what you like, tyranny, threats, anything you choose. But it is his love for you. His desire to spare you—shame, yes, shame and disgrace.

LADY W. What do you mean! You are insolent! What have I to do with you?

Mrs. E. [*humbly*]. Nothing. I know it, but I tell you that your husband loves you, that you may never meet with such love again in your whole life, that such love you will never meet, and that if you throw it away the day may come when you will starve for love and it will not be given to you, beg for love and it will be denied you—Oh! Arthur loves you!

LADY W. Arthur! And you tell me there is nothing between you?

Mrs. E. Lady Windermere, before Heaven, your husband is guiltless of all offence towards you! And I—I tell you that had it ever occurred to me

that such a monstrous suspicion would have entered your mind, I would have died rather than have crossed your life or his—oh, died! gladly died!

[*Moves away to sofa, R.*]

LADY W. You talk as if you had a heart. Women like you have no hearts. Heart is not in you. You are bought and sold. [*Sits L. C.*]

Mrs. E. [*starts with a gesture of pain; then restrains herself, and comes over to where LADY WINDERMERE is sitting. As she speaks she stretches out her hands towards her, but does not dare to touch her*]. Believe what you choose about me. I am not worth a moment's sorrow. But don't spoil your beautiful young life on my account! You don't know what may be in store for you unless you leave this house at once. You don't know what it is to fall into the pit—to be despised, mocked, abandoned, sneered at, to be an outcast, to find the door shut against one, to have to creep in by hideous byways, afraid every moment lest the mask should be stripped from one's face, and all the while to hear the laughter, the horrible laughter of the world—a thing more tragic than all the tears the world has ever shed. You don't know what it is. One pays for one's sin, and then one pays again, and all one's life one pays. You must never know that. As for me, if suffering be an expiation, then at this moment I have expiated all my faults, whatever they have been; for to-night you have made a heart in one who had it not, made it and broken it. But let that pass. I may have wrecked my own life, but I will not let you wreck yours. You—why, you are a mere girl—you would be lost. You haven't got the kind of brains that enables a woman to get back. You have neither the wit nor the courage. You couldn't stand dishonour! No! Go back, Lady Windermere, to the husband who loves you, whom you love. You have a child, Lady Windermere. Go back to that child, who even now, in pain or in joy, may be calling to you. [*LADY WINDERMERE rises.*] God gave you that child. He will require from you that you make his life fine, that you watch over him. What answer will you make to God if his life is ruined through you? Back to your house, Lady Windermere—your husband loves you! He has never swerved for a moment from the love he bears you. But even if he had a thousand loves, you must stay with your child. If he ill-treated you, you must stay with your child. If he abandoned you, your place is with your child.

[*LADY WINDERMERE bursts into tears and buries her face in her hands.*]

[*Rushing to her.*] Lady Windermere!

LADY W. [*holding out her hands to her helplessly, as a child might do*]. Take me home, take me home!

Mrs. E. [*is about to embrace her, then restrains herself. There is a look of wonderful joy in her face*]. Come! Where is your cloak? [*Getting it from sofa.*] Here, put it on. Come at once!

[*They go to the door.*]

LADY W. Stop! don't you hear voices?
 MRS. E. No, no! there is no one!
 LADY W. Yes, there is! Listen! Oh! that is
 my husband's voice! He is coming in! Save me!
 Oh! it's some plot! You have sent for him!

[Voices outside.

MRS. E. Silence! I'm here to save you if I can.
 But I fear it is too late! There! [Points to the
curtain across the window.] The first chance you
 have slip out, if you ever get a chance!

LADY W. But you?

MRS. E. Oh! never mind me! I'll face them.

OSCAR WILDE.

By permission of the Author.

THE UNCLE.

I HAD an uncle once—a man
 Of threescore years and three—
 And when my reason's dawn began
 He'd take me on his knee,
 And often talk whole winter nights
 Things that seemed strange to me.

He was a man of gloomy mood,
 And few his converse sought;
 But, it was said, in solitude
 His conscience with him wrought,
 And there, before his mental eye,
 Some hideous vision brought.

There was not one in all the house
 Who did not fear his frown,
 Save I, a little careless child,
 Who gambolled up and down,
 And often peeped into his room,
 And pluck'd him by the gown.

I was an orphan and alone—
 My father was his brother,
 And all their lives I knew that they
 Had fondly loved each other;
 And in my uncle's room there hung
 The picture of my mother.

There was a curtain over it;
 'Twas in a darkened place,
 And few or none had ever looked
 Upon my mother's face,
 Or seen her pale, expressive smile
 Of melancholy grace.

One night I do remember well—
 The wind was blowing high,
 And through the ancient corridors
 It sounded drearily—
 I sat and read in that old hall,
 My uncle sat close by.

I read, but little understood
 The words upon the book,
 For with a sidelong glance I marked
 My uncle's fearful look,
 And saw how all his quivering frame
 In strong convulsions shook.

A silent terror o'er me stole,
 A strange, unusual dread;
 His lips were white as bone, his eyes
 Sunk far down in his head;
 He gazed on me, but 'twas the gaze
 Of the unconscious dead.

Then suddenly he turned him round,
 And drew aside the veil
 That hung before my mother's face—
 Perchance my eyes might fail,
 But ne'er before that face to me
 Had seemed so ghastly pale.

"Come hither, boy!" my uncle said,—
 I started at the sound,
 'Twas choked and stifled in his throat,
 And hardly utterance found,—
 "Come hither, boy!" then fearfully
 He cast his eyes around.

"That lady was thy mother once,
 Thou wert her only child—
 O God! I've seen her when she held
 Thee in her arms, and smiled,—
 She smiled upon thy father, boy,
 'Twas that which drove me wild!

"He was my brother, but his form
 Was fairer far than mine;
 I grudged not that,—he was the prop
 Of our ancestral line,
 And manly beauty was to him
 A token and a sign.

"Boy! I had loved her too,—nay more,
 'Twas I who loved her first;
 For months, for years, the golden thought
 Within my soul was nursed;
 He came—he conquered—they were wed—
 My air-blown bubble burst!

"Then on my mind a shadow fell,
 And evil hopes grew ripe;
 The damning thought stuck in my heart
 And cut me like a knife,
 That she, whom all my days I loved,
 Should be another's wife!

"By Heaven! it was a fearful thing
 To see my brother 'dow,
 And mark the placid calm which sat
 For ever on his brow,
 That seemed in bitter scorn to say,
 'I am more loved than thou!'

"I left my home—I left the land—
I crossed the raging sea;
In vain, in vain—where'er I turned
My memory went with me;
My whole existence, night and day,
In memory seemed to be.

"I came again, I found them here—
Thou'rt like thy father, boy—
He doted on that pale face there;
I've seen them kiss and toy,—
I've seen him locked in her fond arms,
Wrapt in delirious joy.

"*He disappeared*—draw nearer, child!—
He died—no one knew how;
The murdered body ne'er was found;
The tale is hushed up now;
But there was one who rightly guessed
The hand that struck the blow.

"It drove her mad; yet not his death,—
No—not his death alone;
For she had clung to hope when all
Knew well that there was none,—
No, boy! it was a sight she saw
That froze her into stone!

"I am thy uncle, child—why stare
So frightfully aghast?—
The arras waves, but know'st thou not
'Tis nothing but the blast?
I too have had my fears like these,
But such vain tears are past.

"*I'll show thee what thy mother saw*,—
I feel 'twill ease my breast,
And this wild tempest-laden night
Suits with the purpose best.
Come hither—thou hast often sought
To open this old chest.

"It has a secret spring, the touch
Is known to me alone;
Slowly the lid is raised, and now—
What see you that you groan
So heavily?—that thing is but
A bare-ribbed skeleton."

A sudden crash—the lid fell down—
Three strides he backwards gave,—
"O God! it is my brother's self
Returning from the grave!
His grasp of lead is on my throat—
Will no one help or save?"

That night they laid him on his bed
In raving madness toss'd;
He gnashed his teeth, and, with wild oaths,
Blasphemed the Holy Ghost;
And ere the light of morning broke,
A sinner's soul was lost!

HENRY GLASSFORD BELL.

WHAT SHALL I RECITE?

Old themes are quite exhausted,
And 'neath the noonday sun,
There's nothing new to tell to you,
When all is said and done!
Disheartened and desponding
At finding all so trite,
With nothing new, what *can* I do
Say, *what* shall I recite?

O, shall I speak of battle
And cannon's deadly roar?
I *might*; but then the thing's been done
A million times before!
Or shall I touch a tender tone,
And fly to realms above,
Invoking sun and moon and stars
To shine on human love?
That subject, too, that blissful theme,
Which every bosom thrills—
Love's sov'reign sway (I grieve to say)
Is older than the hills!

Fresh fields and novel pastures
Are nowhere to be found;
Throughout the world there's not an *inch*
Of undiscovered ground!
And every path's so beaten,
I, too, am beaten quite!
O, tell me, *do*, since nothing's new,
Say, *what* shall I recite!

PERCY G. MOCATTA.

By permission of the Author.

SIR WALTER RALEIGH'S FIRST SMOKE.

WHEN Sir Walther Rolly landed in Ould Virginny for the second time, he went straight off to the palace an' paid his respects to the King, an ugly-looking but well-maynin' Naygro wud a ring out of his nose like a conthrairey bull.

"Well, Rolly," says the King, "what brings you here this trip? If it's more goold you're wantin', let me tell you the diggin's are exhausted for the present. In fact, we have had a terrible bad saison of it altogether. Even the potayties tuk the blight, an' you couldn't get a sound spud for love or money in Ould Virginny this minute."

"O murder!" says Rolly. "Sure that's what brings me here—to conthraict wud you for a whole-sale supply of spuds."

"Faix, an' you must do widout 'em," says the King. "Tell me," says he, "did you get many of 'em in your own country?"

"I did," says Rolly, "an' a good job too it seems."

"You're right," says the King, "for I don't believe there's another distrikt where they grows

'em in all Amerikay. You can spring the price on the next saison's crop."

"Leave that to me," says Rolly, wud a grin.

"But don't be talkin'," says he, "but this is a regular slap in the face for me! I have a whole fleet of ships in the harbour, an' of coorse they'll be comin' down on me for the amount of freight an' demurrage."

"You can get the protection of the Coort," says the King, "if that's any help to you."

"I'm obliged to your Majesty," says Rolly, "but sure they'd saize on my property over in Munsther if I tried to play any thricks of that kind. Maybe you have some other marketable matayrial I could load the little vessels wud?"

"Did you ever take a blast of a pipe?" axes the King.

"Never," says Rolly. "What is it?"

"Well, it's a quare thing," says the King, "that we have to be taychin' ye in the ould country all the resources of civilisation. Ye seems to have no invition in ye at all. Here," says he, taking a black little *dhudeen* from the rim of his crown, "take a *shough* of that, an' tell me how you likes it."

"How do you work it?" axes Rolly.

"Stick it between your lips," says the King, "an' when I lights it up for you, dhraw in the smoke, an' then blow it out again."

"Blow what out?" axes Rolly.

"The smoke, of coorse!" says the King.

"That seems a quare sort of divarison," says Rolly—"suckin' it in wan minute an' blowin' it out the next. Couldn't I consume it?"

"O begor, you can fill your stomach wud it if you like," says the King; "but if you'll take my advice, you'll do nothing of the sort, for it takes a powerful smoker to swaller the fumes wudout sayrious inconvaynience. Are you ready now?" says he.

"I am," says Rolly, stickin' the pipe between his teeth.

"Dhraw now!" says the King, strickin' a match on the leg of his throwers an' howldin' it over the bowl of the *dhudeen*.

So Rolly dhraws in a mouthful, an' of coorse, it bein' a first offer, every morsel of the tobacco-smoke wint down his gullet.

Down he dashes the pipe on the ground, blowin' an' splutterin', an' coughin' like a consumptive whale.

"I towld you!" says the King, slappin' him on the back.

"Towld me 'what?' coughs Rolly, as vexed as you please.

"Towld you not to swally the smoke," says the King.

"'Twas a dirty thrick to play on me," says Rolly.

"Thrick!" says the King. "I tell you there was no thrick at all in it. Look here," says he, takin' another pipe out of his crown, for the wan

he gave Rolly was smashed completely. "Watch how I does it!" An' wud that he tucks his legs under him like a tailor, an' filling his *dhudeen* he starts puffin' blasts of smoke out through the ring of his nose. In a few minutes Sir Walther felt as if he was fixed up the flue of a chimney wud a good turf fire underneath, an' he began coughin' an' splutterin' worse nor ever.

"Open the windy, for the love of goodness," says he, "or you'll be answerable for my corpse."

The King laughs hearty at Rolly's onaisiness, an' he opens the windy an' knocks the fire out of his pipe.

When the smoke had partly cleared off, Sir Walther axes the King:

"Now, what sort of pleasure or benefit do you get from makin' fireworks of yourself like that?"

"Wait till yer grows seasoned to it," answers the King, "an' you wouldn't give up your pipe for all the goold in the Mint."

"Tell that to the marines," says Rolly. "Might I venture to ax what was the stuff you wor settin' fire to in the pipe and stinkin' the place wud?"

"Twist tobacco," says the King.

"'Tis the devil's own twist!" says Rolly. "Do many of ye practice the thrick in these parts?"

"Every wan of us," answers the King.

"A wondher I never noticed any of ye on my former thrip to the country," says Rolly.

"Aisly explained," says the King. "You wor a stranger then, an' we makes it a rule of never smokin' before strangers."

"I suppose it's this tobacco that turns ye all so black in the skin!" says Rolly.

"That's a good joke," says the King, wud a hearty laugh. "No, Rolly," says he, "it don't turn us black, but it turns some of us green, just like yerself a while back." An' thin he bursts out laughin' again until he nearly shuk the ring out of his nose.

"You're in a good humour this mornin'," says Rolly, as vexed as if some one was after passin' a bad half-sovereign on him.

"Arrah, don't be so glum in yerself!" says the King. "An' believe me what I'm tellin' you, that there's a fortune in this tobacco for you if you could only introduce it into your own country. I know it wants a thrainin', but, as I've said before, wance you takes to it you wouldn't give it up for all the goold in the Mint. You'd go on wan meal a day rather than do wudout the pipe."

"I know you're a thoughtful man," says Rolly, "an' if you're in airnest now, of coorse I'll go into any thrainin' you recommend in order to make money out of tobacco, or any other mortall thing."

"Well, my advice to you," says the King, "is to buy a ha'penny cane an' cut into junka of about three inches long. Smoke wan of 'em a day for a week, an' then I'll get you some mild tobacco, an' a new clay pipe. I was thrained on a cane meself," says the King.

"I'll take you at your word," says Rolly, "though it seems very poor fun to me."

"You'll change your mind in the coorse of a week or two," says the King of Virginny. "Don't throw up the sponge if the stomach kicks agen the cane in the start."

"I'll give it every chance," says Rolly; and wud that he starts out an' buys the cane, an' every mornin' for a week he had an odd puff at it. The first few days he was as sick as a dog, an' his face was as green as a head of cabbage, but he sthrove on, an' towards the end of a week he began to take a likin' to his smoke, an' 'twas wud a light heart he went to the palace and axed the King for the loan of the pipe wud the mild tobaccy.

The King was mighty proud at the success of his thrainin', an' he loaded the pipe wud the dhriest and the mildest brand he could lay howld of. Sure enough, Rolly was greatly plaised wud his shough, an' every day for another week he used to go out an' hide undher a hedge, or in a hayloft, an' hawe a dhraw out of his new ha'porth of clay. At the end of that week man or mortail couldn't keep him from the pipe, an' then he felt the thruth of the King of Virginny's words.

"Begor," says he to himself, "my fortune 'ud be made if I could only smuggle a few cargoes of this tobaccy into the ould counthry. An' sure it ought to be aisye enough to 'run' it," says he, "if I only goes the right way about it."

As soon as he made up his mind to thiade on the tobaccy, he could think of nothing but plans for dodgin' the Revenue men; an' at last he decided that the aisiest and most likely way wud be to putend it was potayties he was carryin' in the ships. So he sthrikes a bargain wud the King of Virginny, an' buys up the whole saison's crop.

Well, in due coorse the fleet sails out of Virginny, an' before they thrippid anchor Rolly made a last call on the King, an' the King sent for the Coort Tobaccy-Curer, who gave Sir Walther full instrue-thions about the rearin' an' manufacturin' of the weed.

"I'm greatly obliged to your Majesty," says Rolly, before laivin' the palace; "an' I've decided to christen my first consignment of tobaccy 'Naygro-head,' afther your own self; an' more than that," says he, "as soon as I can get to win'ard of the Government of my own counthry, an' secure a licence for the sole supplyin' of the weed, I'll make it a rule to have a plaster cast of yerself stuck up over every shop where they sells pipes and tobaccy. In that way, your Majesty," says he, "your pic-thur'll go down to our childre's childre as wan of the greatest benefactors of the human race that ever dhriilled a hole in this nose."

Begor, the poor King was so touched wud the beautiful langwidge of Sir Walther, that he fell on his an' wept a flood of tears over Rolly's shoulder; n' 'twas as much as about a dozen of his wives

could do to tear his arms from the neck of the great navigator.

Rolly's fleet missed Cork harbour, owin' to change of win', an' the first Irish land they got a grip of was the enhrance of the Shannon. Sir Walther had no throuble at all in dodgin' the Revenue officers, an' he landed all the cargoes of tobaccy safe an' sound at Limerick Quay, an' got 'em into a warehouse wudout payin' a single farding of duty.

Then he started makin' Limerick Twist, an' down he goes to Youghal an' plants a few hundred acres wud some of the hardiest leafs; an' shortly afther, his Munsther property havin' got into the hands of the Cavendish family, he christened the first crop raised on the Youghal estate "Cavendish" tobaccy.

EDMUND DOWNY.

*From "Through Green Glasses."
By permission of the Author.*

A TALE OF THE LONDON MISSION.

"COME in! Come in!" the lady said—the door stood open wide—

The church was bnight, and young and old were ranging side by side;

The lady's look was soft and grave, her voice was low and sweet;

The girl half stopped and turned—and then went faster down the street.

One moment, and a gentle hand upon her arm was pressed:

"Oh, won't you stay?" the kind voice said; "come in, come in and rest;

The missioner will preach to-night, and all the church is free:

You won't refuse me now, my child; come in, and sit by me."

"No, no," she said, yet stopped and looked (it was not hard to trace

The conflict passing like a cloud across that fair young face)—

Then hastily, as though she feared her heart at last might fail,

Passed in and sat beside the door, so weary, sad, and pale.

The preacher spoke of God's great love, and how the Saviour blest

Called weary souls to come to Him, that He might give them rest.

He spoke no grand or learned words, he used no studied art,

He simply spoke as one who tried to reach his brother's heart.

It was the old, old story, that can never pall or tire

When the lips with grace are fervent, and the heart with love on fire.

And the lady marked how one by one the tears
 drops grew and fell,
 While eagerly those wistful eyes were fixed as by
 a spell.
 And then a hymn rose all around—no cultured
 choir's display,
 For every voice and every heart seemed moved to
 sing that day;
 And faster, faster rained the tears, for with the
 well-known air
 Came back her childhood's happy days, her child-
 hood's home so fair.
 She sees her father's thin white locks, her mother's
 loving eyes—
 This night she cannot put aside the memory, if
 she tries:
 She sees—she cannot help but see—the little sister
 sweet;
 She hears upon the broad old stairs the little pat-
 tering feet:
 They laid her in the old churchyard beneath the
 sombre yew,
 And "Oh! my God!" the poor girl sobs, "that I
 were laid there too!"
 And now the preacher stands and waits, and bids
 who will to stay,
 For he is yearning for their souls, and he has
 more to say.
 The lady still is kneeling there, but kneeling all
 alone,
 She lifts her head—alas! the girl has left the church
 and gone.
 She had so yearned to take her hand and help her,
 and she sighs,
 To think of that poor suffering face, those eager,
 tearful eyes.
 The pleading voice has ceased, yet still a scattered
 few are there,
 As one by one the missionary kneels by their side
 in prayer:
 And one by one they pass away with hearts that
 throb to feel
 They have been very near to One whose touch
 hath power to heal.
 "Oh! had that poor child only stayed and told
 her tale of grief,"
 The lady thinks, "perchance she too had found
 the blest relief!"
 And now from out the silent church she with a
 friend departs;
 Their words are few, but fewest words speak best
 from fullest hearts.
 They part at last; and there behold! half eager
 and half shy,
 The girl with those poor tear-stained cheeks, that
 sad beseeching eye.
 "Oh, it was long to wait," she said, "I thought it
 ne'er would end:
 And then I could not speak to you, for you were
 with your friend;"

Oh, help me, help me, if you can!" The lady
 gently smiled—
 "I will," she said, "but God is love, and He will
 help His child."
 "Oh, no! oh, no!" the poor girl cried, despair in
 every tone,
 "You cannot know how far away from His true
 fold I've gone.
 I'm not as one who never knew; time was I used
 to pray,
 I tried to do the right, but oh! I've turned His
 love away!
 Five years have passed since I wrote home, and
 now I cannot tell
 Whether my parents are alive: they don't know
 where I dwell;
 And all that time I never once have crossed the
 church's doors
 Until this night—and now, O God! there's hope
 for me no more!"
 "Nay, nay, that can't be true, my child" (and oh!
 like gentle rain
 The words fell on that withered heart and softened
 it again);
 "Why did God let me come to you? Why did He
 let you stay,
 Unless He had some word of hope to speak to
 you to-day?
 Oh, offer Him this very night that worthiest sacri-
 fice,
 The broken and the contrite heart which He will
 not despise;
 We both have need of pardoning grace; yes,
 sister, we will lay
 Our sin-stained souls before His feet, and for His
 mercy pray.
 And promise me one thing—this night before
 all else you do,
 That you will to your mother write, and ask her
 pardon too."
 "I will," she sobbed; and then her hand the lady
 kindly took,
 And bade her read the blessed words of peace in
 God's own Book.
 "I have no Bible now," she said: the lady sadly
 smiled,
 "That must not be," she said; "take mine; and
 now good-night, my child."
 Next morning at a hospital the lady needs must
 call—
 Ah! little dreamt she of the tale that on her ears
 would fall.
 Why runs the nurse to meet her there ere she can
 speak a word?
 "Oh! is it not most strange and sad! Nay,
 surely you have heard?
 A girl has been brought in to-day, but only just
 to die,
 By some rough driver in the street struck down
 and left to lie;

We know her not, but you may know, for, strange
as it may sound,
A Bible with your name in it was all the clue we
found."

"Oh, let me see," the lady said, "I think I know
too well—

Yes, it is she—but tell me, nurse, whate'er there is
to tell."

"Not much," she said, "but once she spoke, before
she passed away;

We thought she gasped, 'Thank God! Thank
God! this was not yesterday!'"

Next day there stood before the gate, with hearts
too full to speak,

A father with his thin white locks, a mother grave
and meek.

The kind folk at the lodging-house had guessed
their errand well,

And sent them on, but had not heart the thing
they knew to tell.

The lady sees them standing there; she knows
who it must be;

No need to ask them who they are, or whom they
came to see.

She runs to meet them—"Yes," she cries, "I
know what you would say:

Your child is here; my poor, poor friends, it hap-
pened yesterday.

Come in, come in! God comfort you, and make
you firm and brave,

For oh! your child has gone to Him, and found
Him strong to save."

And then she took them by the hand like little
children weak,

They went with her, scarce knowing aught, too
stunned to think or speak,

And then she told them all the tale, in loving
words and slow:—

Ah me! they came to find their child—and they
have found her so!

She lay there white and beautiful, no trace of
conflict now,

No lines that told of sin or shame upon that marble
brow.

The aged pair they knelt beside the bed where she
was laid,

And "Not our will, but Thine be done!" amid
their sobs they prayed.

What though the flower of childhood's grace no
more be blooming there,

His snow-white lily death has laid upon that form
so fair.

"Blest are the pure in heart!" so once the Friend
of sinners cried—

Yet not unblest, methinks, are those whom He has
purified!

W. WALSHAM HOW.

From the "Poems" of Bishop How. By permission of
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THE ENGINE-DRIVER'S STORY.

You ask me why I feel so proud to drive the night-
express?

For the work is full of danger, sir, as any man can
guess;

And many a stouter heart than mine has often
quailed with fear,

And many a healthy cheek has paled when death
came, oh, so near!

When the lights ahead stood out blood-red, and
the speed could scarce be checked,

To save the train with its human freight from
being quickly wrecked.

And yet no sound is e'er so sweet to the engine-
driver's mind,

As the hissing snort of the iron steed when the
city's left behind;

No sight so grateful to his eyes as the steed he
loves so well;

But the tale of a ride I'll ne'er forget I purpose
now to tell.

There was something strange, as I noticed, sir, one
night about my mate,

While off to the north with a hundred souls we
rode at a furious rate.

Scarce a word he spoke till the last big town we
halted at we'd passed,

And well I knew his mind with some great trouble
was o'ercast.

But all on a sudden his manner changed, and
with flashing eyes cried he,

"There's a wrong betwixt us both which now, I
swear, shall righted be!

You've pressed your suit on the girl I love—I
learned it all to-day!"—

For an instant, sir, I held my breath, nor knew I
what to say.

Then my thoughts came back, and I quickly said,
"To woo her I was free;

I asked her hand a week ago, and she promised
mine to be."

"Ah, yes; I know!" he hissed in my ear, "and the
one fond hope of my life

Is dashed to the ground, for I have longed to make
that girl my wife;

For a time she gave me gracious smiles, but my
love I never told

Till this very day, when I pleaded hard, but found
her heart was cold,

And I learned that *you* had won the prize—oh,
wretched is my fate!

I can only wish her all that's good—but you are
the man I *hate*!"

With that he strove to throw me down in a frenzy
of despair,

And long we wrestled fiercely in the engine's lurid
glare,

Till at last he contrived to trip me up, and as on the plate I lay,
He dealt me a ponderous blow on the head, and I forthwith swooned away.

When I opened my eyes the moon shone bright, the stars peeped out o'erhead,
Jim helped me up and wept for joy to find I wasn't dead.

"Good God!" I cried, "see yonder lights! There death awaits us all;

What fools to quarrel here like this, neglecting duty's call!"

Not a minute to lose, I put hard the brake, shut off every inch of steam,

While the terminus lights loomed out ahead—I moved as in a dream!

And great drops of sweat that felt like ice oozed out from my fevered brain:

Thank God! in the very nick of time I stopped the rushing train!

Yes; that was of perilous rides the worst; but pleased am I to say,

Jim acted as my Best Man on my happy wedding-day.

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

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THE MADMAN.

YES!—a madman! How that word would have struck to my heart many years ago! How it would have roused the terror that used to come upon me sometimes, sending the blood hissing and tingling through my veins, till the cold dew of fear stood in large drops upon my skin, and my knees knocked together with fright! I like it now, though! It's a fine name! Show me the monarch whose angry frown was ever feared like the glare of a madman's eye—whose cord and axe were ever half so sure as a madman's gripe! Ho! ho! It's a grand thing to be mad! to be peeped at like a wild lion through the iron bars—to gnash one's teeth and howl through the long still night, to the merry ring of a heavy chain—and to roll and twine among the straw, transported with such brave music. Hurrah for the madhouse! Oh, 'tis a rare place!

I remember days when I was afraid of being mad: when I used to start up from my sleep, and fall upon my knees, and pray to be spared from the curse of my race; when I rushed from the sight of merriment or happiness, to hide myself in some lonely place and spend the weary hours in watching the progress of the fever that was to consume my brain. I knew that madness was mixed up with my very blood and the marrow of my bones; that one generation had passed away without the pestilence appearing among them, and that I was the first in whom it would revive. I

knew it *must* be so; that so it always had been, and so it would ever be; and when I cowered in some obscure corner of a crowded room, I saw men whisper and point and turn their eyes towards me. I knew they were telling each other of the doomed madman, and I slunk away again to mope in solitude.

I did this for years; long, long years they were. The nights here are long sometimes—very long; but they are nothing to the restless nights and dreadful dreams I had at that time. It makes me cold to remember them. Large dusky forms, with sly and jeering faces, crouched in the corners of the room and bent over my bed at night, tempting me to madness. They told me in low whispers that the floor of the old house in which my father's father died was stained with his own blood, shed by his own hand in raging madness. I drove my fingers into my ears, but they screamed into my head till the room rang with it; that in one generation before him the madness slumbered, but that his grandfather had lived for years with his hands fettered to the ground, to prevent his tearing himself to pieces. I knew they told the truth—I knew it well. I had found it out years before, though they had tried to keep it from me. Ha! ha! I was too cunning for them, madman as they thought me.

At last it came upon me, and I wondered how I could ever have feared it. I could go into the world now and laugh and shout with the best among them. I knew I was mad, but they did not even suspect it. How I used to hug myself with delight when I thought of the fine trick I was playing them after their old pointing and leering when I was not mad, but only dreading that I might one day become so! And how I used to laugh for joy when I was alone, and thought how well I kept my secret and how quickly my kind friends would have fallen from me if they had known the truth. I could have screamed with ecstasy when I dined alone with some fine roaring fellow, to think how pale he would have turned and how fast he would have run if he had known that the dear friend who sat close to him, sharpening a bright glittering knife, was a madman, with all the power and half the will to plunge it in his heart. Oh, it was a merry life!

Riches became mine, wealth poured in upon me, and I rioted in pleasures, enhanced a thousandfold to me by the consciousness of my well-kept secret. I inherited an estate. The law—the eagle-eyed law itself—had been deceived, and had handed over disputed thousands into a madman's hands. Where was the wit of the sharp-sighted men of sound mind? Where the dexterity of the lawyers eager to discover a flaw? The madman's cunning had overreached them all.

I had money. How I was courted! I spent it profusely. How I was praised! How those three proud overbearing brothers humbled themselves

before me! The old white-headed father too—such deference—such respect—such devoted friendship—why, he worshipped me. The old man had a daughter, and the young men a sister; and all the five were poor. I was rich; and when I married the girl I saw a smile of triumph play upon the faces of her needy relatives, as they thought of their well-planned scheme and their fine prize. It was for me to smile. To smile? To laugh outright, and tear my hair, and roll upon the ground with shrieks of merriment. They little thought they had married her to a madman.

Stay. If they had known it would they have saved her? A sister's happiness against her husband's gold! The lightest feather I blow into the air against the gay chain that ornaments my body!

In one thing I was deceived, with all my cunning. If I had not been mad—for though we madmen are sharp-witted enough we get bewildered sometimes—I should have known that the girl would rather have been placed stiff and cold in a dull leaden coffin, than borne an envied bride to my rich, glittering house. I should have known that her heart was with the dark-eyed boy whose name I once heard her breathe in her troubled sleep; and that she had been sacrificed to me, to relieve the poverty of the old white-haired man and the haughty brothers.

I don't remember forms or faces now, but I know the girl was beautiful. I *know* she was; for in the bright moonlight nights when I staid up from my sleep and all is quiet about me, I see, standing still and motionless in one corner of this cell, a slight and wasted figure with long black hair, which, streaming down her back, stirs with no earthly wind, and eyes that fix their gaze on me and never wink or close. Hush! the blood chills at my heart as I write it down—that form is *here*; the face is very pale, and the eyes are glassy bright, but I know them well. That figure never moves; it never frowns and mouths as others do that fill this place sometimes; but it is much more dreadful to me, even than the spirits that tempted me many years ago—it comes fresh from the grave, and is so very death-like.

For nearly a year I saw that face grow paler; for nearly a year I saw the tears steal down the mournful cheeks and never knew the cause. I found it out at last, though. They could not keep it from me long. She had never liked me. I had never thought she did: she despised my wealth and hated the splendour in which she lived—I had not expected that. She loved another. This I had never thought of. Strange feelings came over me, and thoughts forced upon me by some secret power whirled round and round my brain. I did not hate her, though I hated the boy she still wept for. I pitied—yes, I pitied—the wretched life to which her cold and selfish relations had doomed her. I knew that she could not live long, but the

thought that before her death she might give birth to some ill-fated being, destined to hand down madness to its offspring, determined me. I resolved to kill her.

For many weeks I thought of poison, and then of drowning, and then of fire. A fine sight the grand house in flames, and the madman's wife smouldering away to cinders! Think of the jest of a large reward, too, and of some sane man swinging in the wind for a deed he never did, and all through a madman's cunning! I thought often of this; but I gave it up at last. Oh! the pleasure of stropping the razor day after day, feeling the sharp edge, and thinking of the gash one stroke of its thin bright point would make!

At last the old spirits who had been with me so often before whispered in my ear that the time was come, and thrust the open razor into my hand. I grasped it firmly, rose softly from the bed, and leaned over my sleeping wife. Her face was buried in her hands. I withdrew them softly, and they fell listlessly on her bosom. She had been weeping; for the traces of the tears were still wet upon her cheek. Her face was calm and placid; and even as I looked upon it, a tranquil smile lighted up her pale features. I laid my hand softly on her shoulder. She started—it was only a passing dream. I leaned forward again. She screamed and awoke.

One motion of my hand, and she would never again have uttered cry or sound. But I was startled and drew back. Her eyes were fixed on mine. I know not how it was, but they cowed and frightened me; and I quailed beneath them. She rose from the bed, still gazing fixedly and steadily on me. I trembled; the razor was in my hand, but I could not move. She made towards the door. As she neared it she turned, and withdrew her eyes from my face. The spell was broken. I bounded forward and clutched her by the arm. Uttering shriek upon shriek, she sank upon the ground.

Now, I could have killed her without a struggle; but the house was alarmed. I heard the tread of footsteps on the stairs. I replaced the razor in its usual drawer, unfastened the door, and called loudly for assistance. They came and raised her, and placed her on the bed. She lay bereft of animation for hours; and when life, look, and speech returned, her senses had deserted her, and she raved wildly and furiously.

Doctors were called in—great men, who rolled up to my door in easy carriages, with fine horses and gaudy servants. They were at her bedside for weeks. They had a great meeting, and consulted together in low and solemn voices in another room. One, the cleverest and most celebrated among them, took me aside, and bidding me prepare for the worst, told me—me, the madman!—that my wife was mad. He stood close beside me at an open window, his eyes staring in my face,

and his hand laid upon my arm. With one effort, I could have hurled him into the street beneath. It would have been rare sport to have done it; but my secret was at stake, and I let him go. A few days after, they told me I must place her under some constraint; I must provide a keeper for her. // I went into the open fields where none could hear me, and laughed till the air resounded with my shouts!

She died next day. The white-headed old man followed her to the grave, and the proud brothers dropped a tear over the insensible corpse of her whose sufferings they had regarded in her lifetime with muscles of iron. All this was food for my secret mirth, and I laughed behind the white handkerchief which I held up to my face as we rode home, till the tears came into my eyes.

But though I had carried my object and killed her, I was restless and disturbed, and I felt that, before long, my secret must be known. I could not hide the wild mirth and joy which boiled within me, and made me, when I was alone, at home, jump up and beat my hands together, and dance round and round, and roar aloud. When I went out and saw the busy crowds hurrying about the streets, or to the theatre, and heard the sound of music, and beheld the people dancing, I felt such glee that I could have rushed among them, and torn them to pieces, limb from limb, and nowled in transport. But I ground my teeth and struck my feet upon the floor, and drove my sharp nails into my hands. I kept it down: and no one knew I was a madman yet.

I remember how I let it out at last. Ha! ha! I think I see their frightened looks now, and feel the ease with which I flung them from me, and dashed my clenched fist into their white faces, and then flew like the wind, and left them screaming and shouting far behind. The strength of a giant comes upon me when I think of it.

Let me see;—yes, I had been out. It was late at night when I reached home, and found the proudest of the three proud brothers waiting to see me—urgent business, he said; I recollect it well. I hated that man with all a madman's hate. Many and many a time had my fingers longed to tear him. They told me he was there. I ran swiftly upstairs. He had a word to say to me. I dismissed the servants. It was late, and we were alone together—for the first time.

I kept my eyes carefully from him 'at first, for I knew what he little thought—and I gloried in the knowledge—that the light of madness gleamed from them like fire. We sat in silence for a few minutes. He spoke at last. My recent dissipation, and strange remarks, made so soon after his sister's death, were an insult to her memory. Coupling together many circumstances which had at first escaped his observation, he thought I had not treated her well. He wished to know whether he was right in inferring that I meant to cast a

reproach upon her memory, and a disrespect upon her family. It was due to the uniform he wore, to demand this explanation.

This man had a commission in the army—a commission purchased with my money and his sister's misery. This was the man who had been foremost in the plot to ensnare me and grasp my wealth. This was the man who had been the main instrument in forcing his sister to wed me, well knowing that her heart was given to that puling boy. Due! Due to his uniform! The livery of his degradation! I turned my eyes upon him—I could not help it—but I spoke not a word.

I saw the sudden change that came upon him beneath my gaze. He was a bold man, but the colour faded from his face, and he drew back his chair. I dragged mine nearer to him, and as I laughed—I was very merry then—I saw him shudder. I felt the madness rising within me. He was afraid of me.

"You were very fond of your sister when she was alive," I said, "very!"

He looked uneasily round him, and I saw his hand grasp the back of his chair, but he said nothing.

"You villain!" said I, "I found you out; I discovered your hellish plot against me; I know her heart was fixed on some one else before you compelled her to marry me. I know it—I know it!"

He jumped suddenly from his chair, brandished it aloft, and bid me stand back—for I took care to be getting closer to him all the time I spoke. I screamed rather than talked, for I felt tumultuous passions eddying through my veins, and the old spirits whispering and taunting me to tear his heart out.

"Damn you!" said I, starting up and rushing upon him, "I killed her! I am a madman! Down with you! Blood, blood, I will have it!"

I turned aside with one blow the chair he hurled at me in his terror, and closed with him, and with a heavy crash we rolled upon the floor together.

It was a fine struggle that; for he was a tall, strong man fighting for his life, and I, a powerful madman, thirsting to destroy him. I knew no strength could equal mine, and I was right. Right again, though a madman! His struggles grew fainter. I knelt upon his chest, and clasped his brawny throat firmly with both hands. His face grew purple, his eyes were starting from his head, and with protruded tongue he seemed to mock me. I squeezed the tighter.

The door was suddenly burst open with a loud noise, and a crowd of people rushed forward, crying aloud to each other to secure the madman.

My secret was out, and my only struggle now was for liberty and freedom. I gained my feet before a hand was on me, threw myself among my assailants, and cleared my way with my strong arm as if I bore a hatchet in my hand, and bowed them

down before me. I gained the door, dropped over the banisters, and in an instant was in the street. Straight and swift I ran, and no one dared to stop me. I heard the noise of feet behind, and redoubled my speed. It grew fainter and fainter in the distance, and at length died away altogether; but on I bounded through marsh and rivulet, over fence and wall, with a wild shout which was taken up by the strange beings that flocked around me on every side and swelled the sound till it pierced the air. I was borne upon the arms of demons, who swept along upon the wind and bore down bank and hedge before them, and spun me round and round with a rustle and a speed that made my head swim, until at last they threw me from them with a violent shock, and I fell heavily upon the earth. When I awoke, I found myself here—here in this grey cell, where the sunlight seldom comes, and the moon steals in in rays which only serve to show the dark shadows about me, and that silent figure in its old corner. When I lie down awake, I can sometimes hear strange shrieks and cries from distant parts of this large place. What they are I know not; but they neither come from that pale form, nor does it regard them. For, from the first shades of dusk till the earliest light of morning, it still stands motionless in the same place, listening to the music of my iron chains, and watching my gambols on my straw bed.

CHARLES DICKENS.

SAL PARKER'S GHOST.

"How far to Oaklands now, sir?" Well, I should think it were five mile, quite;
But I sha'n't be long a-coaching yer there, this beautiful moonlight night.
She's as good a hoss as the Squire has got, is this old mare, yer know;
Just feel her mouth, and give her her head, and then she's bound to go.

"Can I give yer a song to pass the time?" Well, no; I can holler and shout;
But I warn't in the way, yer see, when they gave the singing faces out;
I should frighten you and the hoss as well, if I tried my vocal skill,
So I think I'll say—kim up, yer brute! I'll teach yer to shy, I will!

"What was the most remarkablest thing that ever happened to me?"
Well, I'm blow'd if I know, sir, and that's the truth; and I kind-o' fancy, yer see,
You're looking out for a bit o' life, as'll do to put in a tale;
For I heard 'em say 'twas a liftery gent as I'd got to meet at the rail.

Ha, ha! you're right, sir. I warn't brought up in this present crib o' mine,
It's driving a hansom cab in town has bin my reg'lar line;
And that reminds me of somethink once that was werry strange and queer—
You may put *that* down in a book, if yer like, for 'tis true as I'm sitting here.

When I fust went up to London, yer see, as a hulking country lad,
I got a helper's place in a mews, work heavy and wages bad;
But I jest kept on in my ploddin' way, for I didn't mean to be beat,
Till step by step I rose in life to a hansom cabman's seat!

And then I married—at last, at last!—for me and my pretty Sal
Had been sweethearts in the dear old days, as country lad and gal;
And she'd promised to wait for me when I went to London to try my fate,
With the thought of her in her country home to keep me steady and straight.

I used to wonder like at times whatever it was she could see,
Such a wee, sweet, pretty, modest lass, in a great rough fellow like me;
But she left her country lanes, dear heart, and her sweetest smiles she brought
To brighten the cabman's happy home in a dingy London court.

And we was werry happy, we was; and I think we was happier still
When there came a little baby to nuss, and a little mouth to fill!
It ain't all pleasure, a cabman's life, but when hard thoughts 'ud come,
I'd only to think of the wee bit babe, and the bonnie wife at home.

So things went on for a couple of years, in humble comfort and joy;
With two little children in our home—a girl and a baby boy!
When the fever came to our little court on a sudden like, yer know,
And the light o' my happy home went out, and a heart was broke at a blow!

I'd wanted the missis and bairns to go to her mother's house to stay,
But she wouldn't hear of leaving me, not even for a day;
So we just kept on, and left it to God; and Sal she was allus found
Acting a Sister o' Mercy's part to the poor sick creeturs around.

But when the fever fust broke out she'd made me
promise, yer see,
With her arms about my neck, one night, as she
sat upon my knee,
That if so be she was took herself, for the children's
sake and my own,
I'd get her into horspital at once to take her chance
alone.

'Twas a trying time, and no mistake, with death
a-hovering near;
And I used to watch the missus and kids with a
jealous kind o' fear,
Till I noticed one day that her bonnie face looked
flushed and heavy-eyed;
And ah! she was taken bad that night a-lying by
my side.

I thought me then of the promise I'd made, and
my heart was strangely stirred,
But the poor dear wife was braver than me, and
she made me keep my word;
She went without a good-bye to the bairns, though
it almost broke her heart,
And wouldn't even give me a kiss when the time
had come to part.

I got some neighbours to look to the bairns, and I
went to my work next day,
But how I got through the weary time 'twould
puzzle me to say;
For I seem'd quite dazed and misty-like, as though
in a dream or worse,
And a leaden dread of sorrow to come hung over
me like a curse.

She'd made me promise I wouldn't try to see her
while she was bad,
But of course I was allus about the place what
little leisure I had,
And when they said she was getting round, and 'ud
soon be home once more,
I thought to myself that welcomer words I'd never
heerd before.

But the sixth day arter she'd left her home, I got
a letter as said—
O God! it makes me shudder now!—that my
Sally was dead—was dead!
She was dead o' the fever, and coffin'd down for
ever from mortal sight,
And if I'd see her put in her grave I'd have to
come that night.

What follow'd was like a dreadful dream. I lost
my head, I think;
I know'd there was tearful women about, who
brought me food and drink;
And I had some black put on to my hat, and was
taken out somewhere,
And I stood at night by an open grave, and saw
a coffin there.

They brought me home, and by slow degrees it all
grew clear and plain,
And I mind me well of the passionate tears that I
fancy saved my brain;
And I fell on my knees beside the bed—though I
thought my heart would break,
And prayed for strength to bear it all for her
little children's sake.

Her children's sake! The two wee bairns, who was
orphans now, yer know,
The neighbours had took 'em away for a bit—and
perhaps it was better so;
God knows that better or truer friends had never
man before;
Ah! 'tis little you gentlefolks can kno' of the
care of the poor for the poor!

A week had pass'd and I sat one night, by the
dying fire alone,
A brooding and broken-hearted man, whose hope
in life was gone,
When I heerd a sudden footfall without, that kind
o' startled me then,
For 'twas like the step of the dear dead wife, who
would never walk again.

I thought 'twas a neighbour about, maybe, and
went to the window near,
But I started back with a bitter cry and a sudden
frightful fear;
For there, with its wild white face to the pane,
I saw as plain as life,
An awful something a-peering in, in the likeness
of my wife!

It beckon'd to me with its phantom hand, and I
felt that my hour was nigh,
And I soon must join my Sally again in the better
home on high,
When, oh, the door flew open, and there, O there,
It stood on the floor!
And a sudden mist came over me, and I recollect
no more.

When I came to myself I was lying down on our
bit of a sofy there,
And the neighbours were gather'd about me then
with a pitying, startled air;
I felt quite dazed and misty at first, and I swooned
again almost
When the terrible truth came back to me—the open
door and the ghost!

They tried to soothe me, the women did, and said
I must bear it well,
But there'd bin a sad mistake, and they'd got some
happy news to tell;
Then I heerd a sudden sob and a cry, that came
from behind the rest,
And my Sally was kneeling by my side, with her
head upon my breast!

* * * * *

Her story was simple. With care and skill she'd begun to mend apace;
 She was moved to the convalescent ward for another to take her place;
 But in the hurry her name, y'er see, was left up over the bed,
 So that when the other poor creetur sunk they thought it was Sal was dead!

I'm a roughish sort myself, I am, but I leave y'er to understand
 What my feelings was as we sat that night a-talkin' hand in hand,
 With the light of my life brought suddenly back, when all seem'd shadder and gall,
 And my heart aglow with passionate thanks to the merciful Giver of all.

But I'd had enough of y'er London courts, and we both was shaky and queer;
 So I wrote for a crib as was advertised by the good old master here.
 And here's the lodge, with Sally herself awaiting to open the gate—
 Hi, Sal! y'er may cook them bloaters now; I'll be in directly, mate!

EDWIN COLLIER.

From "*Homespun Yarns*."

By permission of EDMUND DURRANT, Esq.

THE RESCUE.

THE sea is wild, the sky o'ercast,
 The waves, with angry roar,
 Like savage foes advancing fast,
 Invade the peaceful shore.

There's not a sail or speck or spar
 On ocean's wide expanse,
 There's not a creature, near or far,
 On land, where'er we glance,

Save one—a lonely female form,
 That hastes along the beach,
 To shelter from the coming storm
 Beyond the billow's reach.

Hark! hark!—a cry of deep distress.
 She stops! What can it be?
 Look! look!—it is—great Heaven!—ah! yes!—
 An infant in the sea!

The waves have snatched it from her arms,
 In cruel sport 'tis toss'd!
 She cries, half crazed with dread alarms,
 "Lost! lost! my darling lost!"

"Help! help!"—but where can help be found?
 No human voice replies.

In wild despair she looks around,
 While echo mocks her cries.

Who rushing comes with flying feet
 Adown the rocky path?
 So strong, so brave, prepared to meet
 The sea in all its wrath.

He marks her anguish and its cause,
 He hears her wail and weep,
 But one brief instant does he pause,
 Then plunges in the deep.

The waves curl high, with foam and crash,
 Engulfing him beneath,
 As ravening monsters close and clash
 Their sharp devouring teeth.

He's swallowed up! The deadly surge
 Has crushed his noble life;
 No mortal living could emerge
 From such unequal strife.

And oh! that babe—poor helpless thing—
 The sport of every wave,
 That takes its tiny corpse to fling
 From watery grave to grave.

No! the bold swimmer's living yet;
 With struggle, strain, and gasp,
 He rises, battles hard to get
 The infant in his grasp.

He carries it with head above
 The stifling water's clutch.
 Brave heart! complete your work of love!
 The shore you almost touch.

'Tis gained! and tenderly you place
 The rescued from the dead
 Safe in the mother's fond embrace,
 While tears of joy are shed.

The lost regained, the loved restored,
 A boon of worth untold,
 A noble deed's its own reward.
 Outweighing fame and gold.

Those three are gone, their fears are o'er,
 And nought is now in sight
 Save stormy sky and rocky shore
 And mad seas foaming white.

Who was that hero—he whose breast
 Such perils staunchly braved?
 Who was the mother so distressed?
 Who was the infant saved?

A fine Newfoundland dog was he,
 And she a girl of seven,
 Who dropped her dolly in the sea
 Near Ilfracombe, in Devon!

WALTER PARKER.

By permission of the Author.

LODGINGS FOR THE NIGHT.

THE little adventure I am going to relate happened to me only a short time ago, and you'll agree with me that I'm not likely to forget it in a hurry.

It was nearly ten o'clock at night when the train landed me at Blanktown, in the Midlands, where I had some business to transact. Being a complete stranger in the place, I resolved first of all to secure lodgings for the night. So I espied a most respectable-looking man coming along, and, accosting him, I politely inquired if he could kindly tell me where I might obtain quiet lodgings for the night, as I was a stranger.

"A stranger, are ye?" he replied, with a merry smile; "well, then, the quietest lodgings I know of for miles around is just in there;" and he indicated a plain, substantial-looking building, with an imposing-looking entrance. Thanking him, I at once rang the bell, and was ushered into the presence of a sombre-looking man, whose appearance at once dispelled any idea of undue familiarity. Coming at once to business, I asked:

"Can you kindly accommodate me to-night?"

"It is long past our usual time, sir," he replied, "but we may be able to manage it if it is urgent."

"Well, I can assure you it is urgent," I answered, with a smile. I thought I had come to a mighty particular establishment. However, I followed the man to an inner room, where, taking down a book from the shelves, he armed himself with a pen and prepared to make some entries. I wondered at the method displayed in conducting the business, but thought I must fall in with the ways of the establishment.

"Name?" he ejaculated briefly.

I gave him my name.

"Sex?"

"Goodness gracious!" I thought, "what in the name of Heaven does he take me for?" However, I replied, "Male!"

"Age?"

"Thirty," I replied.

"Church, Dissent, or Catholic?"

"Whatever difference can that make?" was my astonished query.

"All the difference," he gruffly replied. "You must be a green 'un, or you'd know we don't turn 'em all in together."

Wondering still more, I modestly confessed to the orthodox national faith, having duly entered which he took down another book, and, turning over a few leaves, he said:

"Well, there's only one in No. 20, 21 has only three, and can take another—"

"Stop, for Heaven's sake," I exclaimed; "three in a bed?"

"Ay, six in some; howsoever, if you can go to the price, we can open a fresh one."

I hastily assured him that price was not so much an object as comfort and quiet neighbours.

"Oh, 'tis comfortable enough, I'll warrant, and nice dry soil; no room to turn about my neighbours, with a sardonic chuckle; "and as for them, they'll be quiet enough, I'll be bound," he asked, "Certificate's all right, I suppose after a pause.

"Well," I thought, "here's the queerest go I ever met with; one would think I was passing a medical examination." However, I answered, "That's all right."

"Very good," was the reply, "when will you be ready?"

"I am ready now," I answered, "for I am rather tired. I can have a mouthful of supper first, I suppose?"

"What do you mean?" he shouted; "are you trying to make game of me?"

"Certainly not, but I should think you must be poking fun at me, for I never heard such extraordinary questions in my life," he exclaimed, wrath-

"Do you mean to tell me," he said and advanced to-fully, as he rose from his seat, "that you are dead?"

"Buried! God forbid!" I exclaimed. "What in the name of fortune are you thinking about, man? I simply want a quiet night's lodging."

"Why, you darned idiot," was the answer, "this is a cemetery lodge, and I thought you wanted to give orders for a grave!"

"Great Scott!" I murmured, as I rushed for the door, just in time, to escape a book that was launched at my head. I did not turn in anywhere that night, but spent the time in walking about the streets, armed with a stout blackthorn stick, trying to find them; man with a merry smile; but unfortunately I did not, or there might have been a candidate for the "quiet lodgings" I had stumbled upon.

or

THE DREAM OF EUGENE ARAM.

'Twas, in the prime of summer time,

And evening calm and cool,

And four-and-twenty happy boys

Were bounding out of school:

There were some that ran, and some that leapt
To make troutlets in a pool.

And they sped with gamesome minds,
And souls untouched by sin;

To a level mead they came, and there
They drove the wickets in:

They shone the setting sun
Pleasantly over the town of Lynn.

Like sportive deer they coursed about,
And shouted as they ran—

Turning to mirth all things of earth,
As only boyhood can:

But the usher sat remote from all,
A melancholy man!

His hat was off, his vest apart,
To catch heaven's blessed breeze;
For a burning thought was in his brow,
And his bosom ill at ease:
So he leaned his head on his hands, and read
The book between his knees!

Leaf after leaf he turned it o'er,
Nor ever glanced aside;
For the peace of his soul he read that book
In the golden eventide:
Much study had made him very lean,
And pale, and leaden-eyed.

At last he shut the ponderous tome;
With a fast and fervent grasp
He strained the dusty covers close,
And fixed the brazen hasp:
"O God, could I so close my mind,
And clasp it with a clasp!"

Then leaping on his feet upright,
Some moody turns he took;
Now up the mead, then down the mead,
And past a shady nook:
And lo! he saw a little boy
That pored upon a book!

"My gentle lad, what is't you read—
Romance or fairy fable!
Or is it some historic page,
Of kings and crowns unstable?"
The young boy gave an upward glance—
"It is the death of Abel."

The usher took six hasty strides,
As smit with sudden pain;
Six hasty strides beyond the place,
Then slowly back again:
And down he sat beside the lad,
And talked with him of Cain;

And long since then, of bloody men
Whose deeds tradition saves;
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,
And hid in sudden graves;
Of horrid stabs, in graves forlorn,
And murders done in caves;

And how the sprites of injured men
Shriek upward from the sod—
Ay, how the ghastly hand will point
To show the burial clod;
And unknown facts of guilty acts
Are seen in dreams from God!

He told how murderers walked the earth
Beneath the curse of Cain—
With crimson clouds before their eyes,
And flames about their brain:
For blood has left upon their souls
Its everlasting stain!

"And well," quoth he, "I know for truth,
Their pangs must be extreme—
Woe, woe, unutterable woe—
Who spill life's sacred stream!
For why? Methought last night I wrought
A murder in a dream!

"One that had never done me wrong—
A feeble man, and old;
I led him to a lonely field,
The moon shone clear and cold:
'Now here,' said I, 'this man shall die,
And I will have his gold!'

"Two sudden blows with a ragged stick,
And one with a heavy stone,
One rugged gash with a hasty knife—
And then the deed was done:
There was nothing lying at my feet
But lifeless flesh and bone!

"Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,
That could not do me ill;
And yet I feared him all the more,
For lying there so still:
There was a manhood in his look,
That murder could not kill!

"And lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame—
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame!
I took the dead man by the hand,
And called upon his name;

"Oh, God! it made me quake to see
Such sense within the slain!
But when I touched the lifeless clay,
The blood rushed out again!
For every clot or burning spot
Was scorching in my brain!

"My head was like an ardent coal,
My heart as solid ice;
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew,
Was at the devil's price:
A dozen times I groaned, the dead
Had never groaned but twice.

"And now from forth the frowning sky,
From the heaven's topmost height,
I heard a voice—the awful voice
Of the blood-avenging sprite:
'Thou guilty man! take up thy dead,
And hide it from my sight!'

"I took the dreary body up,
And cast it in a stream—
A sluggish water black as ink,
The depth was so extreme.
My gentle boy, remember this
Is nothing but a dream!

"Down went the corpse with a hollow plunge,
And vanished in the pool;
Anon I cleansed my bloody hands,
And washed my forehead cool,
And sat among the urchins young
That evening in the school!

"Oh, heaven, to think of their white souls,
And mine so black and grim!
I could not share in childish prayer,
Nor join in evening hymn:
Like a devil of the pit I seemed,
'Mid holy cherubim!

"And peace went with them one and all,
And each calm pillow spread;
But Guilt was my grim chamberlain
That lighted me to bed,
And drew my midnight curtains round,
With fingers bloody red!

"All night I lay in agony,
In anguish dark and deep;
My fevered eyes I dared not close,
But stared aghast at sleep;
For sin had rendered unto her
The keys of hell to keep!

"All night I lay in agony,
From weary chime to chime,
With one besetting horrid hint,
That hacked me all the time—
A mighty yearning, like the first
Fierce impulse unto crime!

"One stern, tyrannic thought that made
All other thoughts its slave;
Stronger and stronger every pulse
Did that temptation crave—
Still urging me to go and see
The dead man in his grave!

"Heavily I rose up—as soon
As light was in the sky—
And sought the black accursed pool
With a wild misgiving eye;
And I saw the dead in the river bed,
For the faithless stream was dry!

"Merrily rose the lark, and shook
The dewdrop from its wing;
But I never marked its morning flight,
I never heard it sing:
For I was stooping once again
Under the horrid thing.

"With breathless speed, like a soul in chase,
I took him up and ran—
There was no time to dig a grave
Before the day began;
In a lonesome wood, with heaps of leaves
I hid the murdered man!

"And all that day I read in school,
But my thoughts were elsewhere!
As soon as the midday task was done,
In secret I was there;
And a mighty wind had swept the leaves,
And still the corse was bare!

"Then down I cast me on my face,
And first began to weep,
For I knew my secret then was one
That earth refused to keep;
Or land, or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep!

"So wills the fierce avenging sprite,
Till blood for blood atones!
Ay, though he's buried in a cave,
And trodden down with stones,
And years have rotted off his flesh—
The world shall see his bones!

"Oh, God, that horrid, horrid dream
Besets me now awake!
Again—again, with a dizzy brain
The human life I take;
And my red right hand grows raging hot,
Like Cranmer's at the stake.

"And still no peace for the restless clay,
Will wave or mould allow:
The horrid thing pursues my soul—
It stands before me now!"
The fearful boy looked up and saw
Huge drops upon his brow!

That very night, while gentle sleep
The urchin's eyelids kissed,
Two stern-faced men set out from Lynn,
Through the cold and heavy mist;
And Eugene Aram walked between,
With gyes upon his wrist.

THOMAS HOOD.

HARRY'S PLEADING.

AND so they tell you, Mary, love, that I am false
and gay,
And that I woo another maid when I am far
away,
That I am seen in merry mood upon the coast of
France,
And let another pair of eyes allure me to the
dance.
They tell you that I do not care for all the vows
I've made,
That love with me is but a game, at which I've
often played;
They say that sailors win a heart—then think of
it no more,
And that your Harry soon forgets this bit of
English shore.

You knew me as a sturdy boy, you trusted to my arms
To pull you through the gale, without a breathing
of alarm,
I've grown and strengthened in 'your sight, and
shall it be confessed,
That he who clasped with Childhood's hand be-
trayed with Manhood's breast?

I kept my good old mother till she gently drooped
and died;
I have a little sister still, that's clinging to my
side;
And could I bear a manly heart to them, my
Mary, dear—
Could I be faithful to my home, and yet a traitor
here?

Oh! Mary, don't believe the tale—indeed it is not
true;
How could I, even if I tried, love any girl but
you?
Oh! do look up into my face, and see if you can
find
A trace of any feeling there but what is just and
kind.

Tell me who raised the foul report, who cast upon
my name
The taint of infamy that marks with meanness,
vice, and shame;
And if it be a man that gave the bitter slander
birth,
I'll strike the coward, rich or poor, down to his
parent earth.

Curse on the tongues that sought to fling a poison
in my cup!
May ill betide their evil souls—come! Mary, do
look up;
Say that you love me as you did, or, though I'm
proud and brave,
My spirit soon will pray to be beneath the ocean
wave.

Look! here's the curl you gave me when I stood
upon the sands,
Just going for the first sad time to far and foreign
lands;
See! here's the handkerchief you tied so fondly
round my neck,
And these two precious things were all I rescued
from the wreck.

Oh, can it be! do you refuse to listen to my
word?
'Tis simple; but a purer truth the angels never
heard:
I'm faithful to you, Mary, as an honest man can
be,
And would my heart were opened wide for all the
world to see.

But ah! perhaps some other one has gained your
woman's love,
You've changed your roving sea-gull for a quiet
cottage-dove:
You think a fair-cheeked husband that could sit
beside his fire,
Would be a wiser life-mate for a maiden to desire.

Last night I saw young Walter May keep near
your window-sill,
And there he watched you from the door and
joined you on the hill;
And twice before I've seen him lurk beside you on
the road,
And when you fetched the fishing-net, he soon
took up the load.

Oh Mary! something's choking me! Tell, tell
me, is it so?
Say, do you love him? Walter May! tell, tell
me, yes or no?
Oh! let me hear the worst at once, cost what it
will to sever,
I'll only ask for one more kiss, and say good-by
for ever.

That blush—that tear—what do I hear?—you
love but me alone?
God bless you, girl! I breathe again, my life, my
joy, my own!
How could you for a moment doubt the language
of a lip
That breathed for you its deepest prayer upon a
sinking ship!

Come, let me kiss those eyelids dry, and then we'll
walk awhile;
We'll go across the clover-field, and sit upon the
stile—
We'll take the village in our path, for, as you
wisely say,
'Twill mortify the gossip fools, and silence Walter
May.

And, Mary—let me whisper, love—before I sail
again,
I'll work a charm to make the words of evil-
speakers vain,
The first of June will soon be here, and that blest
day shall bring
Your Harry's heart to anchor in a tiny, golden
ring!

ELIZA COOK.

THE STATION-MASTER'S STORY.

"NEXT train for Boddington, sir, 11.30. One
hour to wait, sir; it's the last stopping train. No,
sir, we've no refreshment-room here, sir. Any
Inn, sir? No, nothing within two miles. Yes,
sir! the platform here is cold, sir. MIND, SIR;

STAND BACK, here's the Sheffield express coming through! One of the racing trains? Yes, sir; does the 75 miles from here to Sheffield in an hour and fifteen minutes. Not much traffic here? Well, a good deal *through*, but not much *local*. The driver of that express is one of the best in our company's service. Great nerve required to drive an express? Yes, sir, we all require nerve and presence of mind. In railway life, the call of duty is imperative and sudden. Our individuality becomes merged in the system. We become units in a vast machine, moved by three great powers: steam, discipline, and punctuality. The driver of that very train that's just gone through did his nightly journey all last week with a white set face and an aching heart; for his young wife and new-born babe hung between life and death, and while death fought hard for the two lives dearest to *him*, he had charge, every night, of between two and three hundred lives, *strangers* to him, to conduct safely through a race with time of 300 miles. He saved the lives that were nothing to him from all harm; but the two dearest to him in all the world were taken from him while he was doing his last hour's run. I warrant he's driving now with a broken heart; but his eyes are clear and his nerve unshaken. Ordinary people only see a dirty black man on the engine plate; but I see a hero at his post. Ah! I'm glad you agree with me, sir. Any experiences of my own? Well, a few. But come into my office, sir, I've a nice fire there and nothing comes through till your train is due. Walk in, sir. Excuse me a moment while I sight those signal-lights at the junction points. Then I'll close the door and keep this nor'-easter out. That's all right. Certainly you can smoke here if you like. No, I'll not join you, thank you all the same; I never smoke while on duty. I always look at that signal-box every night at this time. It's a habit. You asked for one of my experiences. I can while away the time by telling you one that happened to me five years ago; it will serve to show how necessary it is for railway people to have all their wits about them and to act with decision. The station-master who hesitates not only jeopardises his situation, but his own life and probably hundreds of other lives. It was just such a night as this five years ago that the incident happened I'm going to tell of. It also illustrates how necessary it is for a station-master, especially at a junction, to be a man who has been through all the grades as I had, though I was only 35 years old when I came here first. Well, sir, at the time I'm speaking of, nothing came through here after 10 o'clock at night, till the night-mail express, which was due at 11.50. We were rather short-handed then, and our best signalman was considerably overworked; often he was in that box from 10 o'clock A.M. till 12 P.M., and nothing extra for it. Such continuous strain is too much, for you must know we have a lot of 'goods' traffic through here since we have effected the junction with a

branch to Camelford and Pottingley, besides all the main-line expresses, specials, excursions, and ordinaries to clear through. Now, that signal-box stands just at the point where the Camelford branch intersects with the main line, and this takes place just where our main road effects a broad sweeping curve towards Boddington and all those important towns which lie between here and Sheffield; so that there are two curves, but not dangerous ones, there, to the right and to the left. Well, on the night I am speaking of I had just seen the 10 o'clock ordinary through, the green lights had come down at the junction-box, showing the line was clear to Batley, the next station. The train had steamed out, and as soon as it had passed the junction-box the red lights came on to block that section of the line till the signal was wired back that she had passed Batley, on receiving which it was the signalman's duty to put on the green lights declaring the line clear. For two hours I had nothing to do on the station; but I never went to bed till I had seen the express through. I had some correspondence to clear off, so I went over to my house on the other side of the road, and sat down in my private room to write my letters. My wife had gone to bed. I soon got so absorbed in my work that I lost count of time. The window of my room looked straight on to the junction points. Raising my eyes from the paper to think how I should word my next letter, my gaze was directed straight on the signal-lights. I was staring at them full three minutes, I daresay, before it flashed upon me that all was not right with them. *The red lights were burning into my eyes.* I pulled out my watch, 11.47. In three minutes the express would be through. I rushed down on to the station, for *the points were worked from that box*. When I got on to the platform I could distinctly hear the roar of the coming express. The signal must have been flashed on back to Bletchington, '*line clear*.' *Then why were there red lights showing?* they should have been green. All this came into my brain in a few seconds. There was no doubt something was amiss. That box is nearly a quarter of a mile from the station platform. I tore like mad down the track, for I knew if the points were not closed the express would run on to the Camelford branch and come into certain collision with one of the night's 'goods' from Camelford. I rushed up the steps into the box. The signalman was lying on the floor. The horror of the situation might have paralysed me; I burst out into a terrible sweat, and felt my hair lifting on my head, for through the glass I could just see the lights of the express *entering the station*. Its roar drowned my shout as I kicked the signalman *to arouse him: he never moved*. In horror I gazed at the row of handles before me. *I did not actually know which two worked the points that must be closed*. Thought was useless, action *was the only thing*. I flung myself upon the two handles in front of where I

stood, and pulled with all my strength. I could almost feel my eyeballs leap from their sockets as I gazed at the train *now flashing past me*. I could see by the curve of the cars that it was taking the right route. Never shall I forget the deep sigh and sense of relief I had! By chance I had pulled the right handles. I could feel the terrified blood rushing back from my heart through my veins. At last I turned to the prostrate form of the signalman. No blame was attached to him; he had been seized by a stroke of paralysis all down one side, the result of overwork. The seizure must have come upon him just after he had wired 'line clear' to Bletchington, and before he was able to change the lights. The little irregularity in not changing his lights before signalling enabled me to know that something was wrong. It took me two hours to fetch a doctor and get the poor signalman conveyed to his home, and then, literally worn out, I went home to bed. My wife was asleep; I just pulled off my clothes and slipped into bed, and was asleep as soon as my head touched the pillow. The excitement had utterly exhausted me.

* * *

"I remembered nothing till I was awakened by a shriek, and somebody trying to shake me. I opened my eyes. It was Annie, my wife.

"Why, Tom, what's been the matter—what has happened?"

"My dear Annie, why did you wake me? let me sleep!"

"But, Tom, Tom, your beautiful black hair is all turned white."

And so it was, and so it is now, sir [*taking his cap off*]. Not a great price, after all, for Saving the Sheffield Express!"

F. ALLAN LAIDLAW.

By permission of the Author.

A DEED OF GRACE.

THEY bore three corpses through the crowded city,
And strangers passed amain
With words of praise and pride, and looks of pity,
To view that funeral train.

"Whom do you follow thus?" I did inquire;
And whispers by me sped
How only two days back had raged a fire,
And these they bore—the dead—

Had died to save a household. All these three
Came draped with dingy pall,
But two as flowering gardens were to see,
The third was *here* of all!

No rose or lily, as the others had
In liberal measure given,

No sprig of jessamine his *own* clad,
No gold-eyed daisy *even*.

He had ~~no~~ friends nor any one who cared
To show with lawful pride,
How he among the rest had nobly dared,
And nobly daring, died.

And as they told me this, the tears did spring
With sympathetic stress,
To think a heart so brave should be a thing
Of utter loneliness!

Not many paces off a girl there stood,
Wan-eyed and thin and pale,
Whose daily task it was as livelihood
To offer flowers for sale.

'Twas all I knew of her, or then or now;
They called her Margaret,
And poverty its pinch on lips and brow
Had prematurely set.

Doubtless that sunny morn she stood in hope
Fair profit she might win
Of her gay wares—roses and heliotrope,
And pinks and jessamine.

But those slow-moving coffins passed her too,
As they by me had passed,
And suddenly, with kindling eyes, she threw
Her flowers across the last.

And the rich blossoms fell this way and that,
Athwart the dingy pall;
Ay! she had done a deed to wonder at,
For she had given her all!

I saw her basket after; not one flower
Left hid within a chink;
She flung them every one in that sweet shower,
Rose, heliotrope, and pink,

And with them flung away her daily bread:
Yet by the gift she gave
(In impulse, if you will), the friendless dead
Went honoured to his grave.

H. L. CHILDE-PENBERTON.

From "In a Tuscan Villa."

By permission of the Author.

THE WRECK OF THE "BIRKENHEAD."

RIGHT on our flank the sun was dropping down;
The deep sea heaved around in bright repose;
When, like the wild shriek from some captured
town,
A cry of women rose.

The stout ship "Birkenhead" lay hard and fast,
Caught without hope upon a hidden rock;
Her timbers thrilled, as nerves, when thro' them
passed
The spirit of that shock.

And ever like base cowards, who leave their
ranks

In danger's hour, before the rush of steel,
Drifted away, disorderly, the planks
From underneath her keel.

So calm the air—so calm and still the flood,
That low down in its blue translucent glass
We saw the great fierce fish, that thirst for
blood,

Pass slowly, then repass.

They tarried, the waves tarried, for their prey!
The sea turned one clear smile! Like things
asleep

Those dark shapes in the azure silence lay,
As quiet as the deep.

Then, amidst oath, and prayer, and rush, and
wreck,

Faint screams, faint questions awaiting no
reply,

Our Colonel gave the word, and on the deck
Form'd us in line to die.

To die!—'twas hard, while the sleek ocean glow'd
Beneath a sky as fair as summer flowers:
All to the boats! cried one—he was, thank God,
No officer of ours.

Our English hearts beat true—we would not stir:
That base appeal we heard, but heeded not:
On land, on sea, we had our Colours, sir,
To keep without a spot.

They shall not say in England that we fought
With shameful strength, unhonour'd life to
seek;

Into mean safety, mean deserters, brought
By trampling down the weak.

So we made women with their children go,
The oars ply back again, and yet again:
Whilst, inch by inch, the drowning ship sank low,
Still, under steadfast men.

—What follows, why recall?—the brave who
died,

Died without flinching in the bloody surf,
They sleep as well beneath that purple tide
As others under turf.

They sleep as well! and roused from their wild
graves,

Wearing their wounds like stars, shall rise
again,

Joint-heirs with Christ, because they bled to save
His weak ones, but in vain.

If that day's work no clasp or medal mark;
If each proud heart no cross of bronze may
press,

Nor cannon thunder loud from tower or park,
This feat we none the less —

That those whom God's high grace there saved from
ill,

Those also left His martyrs in the bay,
Though not by siege, though not in battle, still
Full well had earned their pay.

SIR F. HASTINGS DOYLE.

By permission of Messrs. MACMILLAN & Co.

THE GRIDIRON.

A CERTAIN old gentleman in the west of Ireland
was wont, upon certain festive occasions, to amuse
his friends by "drawing out" one of his servants,
who was exceedingly fond of what he termed his
"thravels." Now it did not take much to draw
Pat out; and this was the story he invariably
told:—

It was the time I was lost in crassin' the broad
Atlantic, a-comin' home, when the winds began to
blow, and the sae to rowl, that you'd think the
Colleen dhas (that was her name) would not have a
mast left but what would rowl out of her.

Well, sure enough, the masts went by the board
at last, and the pumps was choak'd, and av coorse
the weather gained on us, and throth, to be filled
with wather is neither good for man or baste; and
she was sinkin' fast, settlin' down, as the sailors
calls it; and faith I never was good at settlin'
down in my life, and I liked it then less nor ever;
accordin'ly we prepared for the worst, and put
out the boat, and got a sack o' bishkits, and a
cashk o' pork, and a keg o' wather, and a thrifle o'
rum aboard, and any other little matters we
could think iv in the mortal hurry we wor in—
and, faith, there was no time to be lost, for my
darlint, the *Colleen dhas*, went down like a lump o'
lead, afore we wor many strokes o' the oar away
from her.

Well, we drifted away all that night, and next
mornin' we put up a blanket an the ind av a pole
as well as we could, and thin we sailed illigant, for
we darn't show a stitch o' canvas the night
before, bekaise it was blowin' like murther, savin'
your presence, and sure it's the wundher of the
world we wor n't swally'd alive by the ragin' sae.

Well, away we vint for more nor a week, and
nothin' before our two good-looking eyes but the
canopy iv heaven, and the wide ocean—the broad
Atlantic—not a thing was to be seen but the sae
and the sky; and though the sae and the sky is
mighty purty things in themselves, throth they're
no great things whin you've nothin' else to look at
for a week together—and the barest rock in the
world, so it was land—we'd be morn'—
And thin, sure enough, *thly*, as the *o'mous* which
began to run low, the *measur* *g* Thought
and the rum—throth *it* *jesamine* his co, I sung
and oh! it was thin *was* *eyed* *daisy* *even* where I

us in the face. "Oh, murther, murther, captain, darlint!" says I, "I wish we could see land anywhere," says I.

"More power to your elbow, Paddy, my boy," says he, "for sich a good wish, and throth, it's meself wishes the same."

"Oh," says I, "that it may plaze you, sweet queen iv heaven, supposing it was only a dissolute island," says I, "inhabited wid Turks, sure they wouldn't be such bad Christians as to refuse us a bit and a sup."

"Whisht, whisht, Paddy!" says the captain, "don't be talkin' bad of any one," says he; "you don't know how soon you may want a good word put in for yourself, if you should be called to quarters in th' other world all of a sudden," says he.

"Thrue for you, captain, darlint!" says I—I called him darlint, and made free wid him, you see, bokase disthress makes uz all equal—"thrue for you, captain, jewel—I owe no man any spite"—and throth, that was only thruth. Well, the last bishkit was sarved out, and the wather itself was all gone at last, and we passed the night mighty cowl'd. Well, at the brake o' day the sun riz most beautiful out o' the waves, that was as bright as silver and as clear as crysthal. But it was only the more crule upon uz, for we wor beginnin' to feel terrible hungry; when all at wanst I thought I spied the land—I thought I felt my heart up in my throat in a minnit, and "Thunder and turf, captain!" says I, "look to leeward!" says I.

"What for?" says he.

"I think I see the land," says I. So he ups with his bring-um near (that's what the sailors call a spy-glass, sir) and looks out, and, sure enough, it was.

"Hurra!" says he; "we're all right now; pull away, my boys," says he.

"Take care you're not mistaken," says I; "maybe it's only a fog-bank, captain, darlint," says I.

"Oh, no," says he; "it's the land in airnest."

"Oh, then, whereabouts in the wide world are we, captain?" says I. "Maybe it ud be in Roosia or Proosia, or the German Oceant," says I.

"Tut, you fool," says he—for he had that consaited way wid him, thinkin' himself cleverer nor any one else—"that's France," says he.

"Tare and ouns!" says I, "do you tell me so? And how do you know it's France it is, captain, dear?" says I.

"Bekase this is the Bay o' Bishky we're in now," says he.

"Throth, I was thinkin' so myself," says I, "by the rowl it has; for I often heerd av it in regard o' that same;" and throth, the likes av it I never seen before nor since.

Well, with that my heart began to grow light, and when I seen my life was safe, I began to grow

twice hungrier nor ever; so says I, "Captain, jewel, I wish we had a gridiron."

"Why, then," says he, "thundher and turf," says he, "what puts a gridiron into your head?"

"Bekase I'm starvin' with the hunger," says I.

"And sure, bad luck to you," says he, "you couldn't ate a gridiron," says he, "barrir, you wor a pelican o' the wildherness," says he.

"Ate a gridiron!" says I; "och, in troth, I'm not such a gommock all out as that, anyhow. But sure if we had a gridiron we could dress a beef-steak," says I.

"Arrah! but where's the beefsteak?" says he.

"Sure, couldn't we cut a slice off the pork?" says I.

"By the powers, I never thought o' that!" says the captain. "You're a clever fellow, Paddy," says he, laughing.

"Oh, there's many a thrue word said in joke," says I.

"Thrue for you, Paddy," says he.

"Well, thin," says I, "if you put me ashore there beyant" (for we were nearin' the land all the time); "and sure I can ask thim for to lind me the loan of a gridiron," says I.

"Oh, by jabbars, the butther's comin' out o' the stirrabout in airnest now," says he; "you gommock," says he, "sure I towld you before, that's France—and sure they're all furriners there," says the captain.

"Well," says I, "and how do you know but I'm as good a furriner myself as any o' thim?"

"What do you mane?" says he.

"I mane," says I, "what I towld you, that I'm as good a furriner myself as any o' thim."

"Make me sinsible," says he.

"Bedad, maybe that's more nor me, or greater nor me, could do," says I—and we all began to laugh at him, for I thought I'd pay him off for his bit o' consait about the German Oceant.

"Lave off your humbuggin'," says he, "I bid you, and tell me what it is you mane at all at all."

"Parly voo frongsay?" says I.

"Oh, your humble servant," says he. "Why, you're a scholar, Paddy."

"Throth, you may will say that," says I.

"Why, you're a clever fellow, Paddy," says the captain, jeerin' like.

"You're not the first that said that," says I, "whether you joke or no."

"Oh, but I'm in airnest," says the captain. "And do you tell me, Paddy," says he, "that you spake French?"

"Parly voo frongsay?" says I.

"By the powers, that bangs Banagher. I never met the likes o' you, Paddy," says he. "Pull away, boys, and put Paddy ashore."

So with that, it was no sooner said nor done—they pulled away and got close into shore in less than no time and run the boat up in a little creek; and a beautiful creek it was, with a lovely white

sthrand, an illigant place for ladies to bathe in the summer—and out I got; and it's stiff enough in my limbs I was afther bein' cramped up in the boat and perished with the cowl'd and hunger; but I contrived to scramble on one way or the other, tow'rs a little bit av wood that was close to the shore, and the smoke curlin' out of it, quite temptin' like.

"By the powdher's o' war, I'm all right," says I. "There's a house there;" and sure enough there was, and a parcel of men, women, and children atin' their dinner round a table quite convenient. So I wint up to the dure, an' I thought I'd be very civil to them, as I heerd the Frinch was always mighty p'lite intirely—and I thought I'd show them I knew what good manners was.

So I took off my hat, and making a low bow, says I, "God save all here," says I.

Well, to be sure, they all stoop atin' at wanst, and began to stare at me, and faith, they almost looked me out of countenance—and I thought to myself it was not good manners at all—more betoken from furriners, which they call so mighty p'lite; but I never minded that in regard of vantin' the gridiron. "And so," says I, "I beg your pardon," says I, "for the liberty I take; but it's only bein' in disthress in regard of aiting," says I, "that I make howld to trouble yez, and if you could lind me the loan of a gridiron," says I, "I'd be intirely obleeged to ye."

By jabbers, they all stared at me twice worse nor before, and with that, says I (knowing what was in their minds), "Indeed it's thrue for you," says I; "I'm tattered to pieces, and God knows I look quare enough, but it's by reason of the storm," says I, "which dhrew us ashore here below, and we're all starvin'," says I.

So thin they began to look at each other agin, and myself, seeing at wanst dirty thoughts was in their heads and that they tuk me for a poor beggar coming to crave charity—with that says I, "Oh! not at all," says I; "by no manes; we have plenty o' mate ourselves there below, and we'll dress it," says I, "if you would be plazed to lind us the loan of a gridiron," says I, makin' a low bow.

Well, sir, with that, throth they stared at me twice worse nor ever, and faith I began to think that maybe the captain was wrong, and that it was not France at all at all—and so says I, to a fine ould man with a head of hair as white as silver—"maybe I'm under a mistake," says I, "but I thought I was in France, sir; arn't you furriners?" says I—"Parly voo frongsey?"

"We, munseer," says he.

"Thin would you lind me the loan of a gridiron," says I, "if you plaze?"

Oh, it was thin that they stared at me as if I had aivin' heads; and faith, myself began to feel flustered like and onnaisy—and so, says I, makin' a bow and scrape agin, "I know it's a liberty I take, sir, but it's only in the regard of bein' cast

away, and if you plaze, sir," says I, "*Parly voo frongsey?*"

"We, munseer," says he, mighty sharp.

"Then would you lind me the loan of a gridiron," says I, "and you'll obleege me?"

Well, sir, the ould chap begun to munseer me, but not a bit of a gridiron he'd give me, and so I began to think they was all neygars, for all their fine manners; and throth my blood began to rise, and says I, "By my sowl, if it was you was in disthress," says I, "and if it was to ould Ireland you kem, it's not only the gridiron they'd give you if you ax'd it, but something to put on it too, and a dhrop of dhrink into the bargain, and *cead mille failte*."

Well, the word *cead mille failte* seemed to sthreck his heart, and the ould chap cocked his ear, and so I thought I'd give him another offer and make him insinable at last; and so, says I, "I wanst more, quite slow, that he might understand—" "*Parly—voo—frongsey, munseer?*"

"We, munseer," says he.

"Then lind me the loan of a gridiron," says I, "and bad scan to you."

Well, bad win' to the bit of it he'd gie me, and the ould chap begins bowin' and scrapin', and said something or other about a long tongs.

"Phew!" says I, "I don't want a tongs at all at all; but can't you listen to raison?" says I—"Parly voo frongsey?"

"We, munseer."

"Thin lind me the loan of a gridiron," says I, "and howld your prate."

Well, what would you think, but he shook his ould noddle as much as to say he wouldn't; and so says I, "Bad cess to the likes o' that I ever seen—throth if you were in my country it's not that a way they'd use you; the curse o' the crows on you, you ould sinner!" says I.

So he seen I was vex'd, and I thought as I was turnin' away, I see him begin to relint, and that his conscience troubled him; and says I, turnin' back, "Well, I'll give you one chance more you ould thief. Are you a Christian at all at all? Are you a furriner?" says I, "that all the world calls so p'lite? Bad luck to you, do you understand your own language?—*Parly voo frongsey?*" says I.

"We, munseer," says he.

"Thin, thunder and turf," says I, "will you lind me the loan of a gridiron?"

Well, sir, never a bit of it he'd gie me—and so with that, "The curse o' the hungry on you, you ould negardly villian!" says I, "the back o' my hand and the sowl o' my foot to you; that you may want a gridiron yourself yet," says I; "and wherever I go, high and low, rich and poor, shall hear o' you," says I; and with that I lift them there, sir, and kem away—and in throth it's often sense that I thought that it was remarkable.

SAMUEL LOVER.

THE DISCOVERY OF TOBACCO.

He was six-foot-one, this son of a gun,
 And mahogany-brown was his nature;
 With a rum-blown nose of the tint of a rose,
 And a log of some forty-eight year.
 On the western pier he cried, "What cheer!"
 As your humble servant he followed.
 And he clapped a paw to the side of his jaw,
 While with might and main he hallooed—

"Ahoy! a sail! I'll tell you a tale
 O' the roaring, storming sea!
 There was Capen Brown and First Luff Down,
 And Doctor Dickoree;
 And me and Doe, the Holy Joe,
 And Jim with the squint and stutter,
 And Tom, and Ike, and Irish Mike,
 Adrift in the second cutter.

"We sailed away on a summer's day
 Aboard o' the 'Gal-a-tee,'
 For as long a cruise as the Cap. should choose,
 His instructions being free;
 And we made the shore first off Singypore,
 At Pekin spent some days, oh;
 We called on the Pope at the Cape o' Good Hope,
 And we visited Wollop-a-rayso.

"It was off Japan as our woes began,
 For we met with a hurricane,
 And the poor old frigate began to jig it,
 And groan as if full of pain.
 And Capen Brown took the big chart down,
 And in dooty bound for to study,
 With a pipe in his mouth, sou'-west by south,
 In the forrard part o' the cuddy.

"Now, the 'Gal-a-tee' was a-going free,
 When she struck on the boards that day,
 On the larboard tack, and so broke her back,
 And the devil and all to pay.
 Some took to the boats, with some biscuits and
 groats,
 As she went down in fathom five;
 And eight was the boats with the biscuits and
 groats,
 And ninety the seamen alive.

"First cutter went west, and she did her best
 To leave all her mates behind;
 The barge went east, with the waves like yeast,
 And lay well up in the wind;
 The jolly-boat kept herself aloft,
 While the pinnace was always baling;
 And the Capen's gig and the dingy big
 Went off to the south'ard sailing.

"The poor old launch to a rock said *crunch!*
 And drove a hole in her bottom,
 And they made a plug o' the purser's rug
 And the jackets o' them as had got 'em.

Then lay on their oars—just twice two fours—
 As they kep' us astern and nigh by,
 Till a big wave came as if for a game
 And rocked 'em all off to bye-bye.

"So there we ten o' the best o' men
 All lay alone on the sea;
 There was Capen Brown and First Luff Down,
 And Doctor Dickoree,
 And me, and Doe, the Holy Joe,
 And Jim with the squint and stutter,
 And Tom, and Ike, and Irish Mike,
 Adrift in the second cutter.

"We set a sail in the teeth of the gale,
 And away to the north did go;
 Then we tugged at the oar for a fortnit more—
 When the wind refused for to blow,
 But we made no port, and the grub run short,
 And the water was likewise failing;
 And the skipper and Luff says, 'the sitation's
 rough,'
 As they poured the last half-pint a pail in.

"Then Capen Brown, who had hungry grown,
 Unravelled a worsted stocking;
 Made a hook of a pin, and he did begin
 To fish, but his luck was shocking.
 So our hunger to flummox, and stay all our
 stomachs,
 Which was going it hard on the rack, oh!
 He sat on the pail, and told us this tale,
 About what we'd got none of—that's 'bacco:—

"There were three jolly sailors bold,
 As sailed across the sea;
 They braved the storm, and stood the gale,
 And got to Virgin-ee.
 'Twas in the days of good Queen Bess—
 Or p'raps a bit before—
 And now these here three sailors bold
 Went cruising on the shore.

"A lurch to starboard—one to port—
 Now forrard, boys, go we:
 With a haul, and a ho! and a yo heave ho!
 To find out Tobac-kee.

"Says Jack, "This here's a rummy land;"
 Says Tom, "Well, shiver me,
 The sun shines out as precious hot
 As ever I did see."
 Says Dick, "Messmates, since here be we"—
 And gave his eye a wink—
 "We've come to find out Tob'ee,
 Which means a drop to d'ee."

"Says Jack, says he, "Th' ajins thinks—"
 Says Tom, "I'll swear as hey
 Don't think at all." Says Dick, "You're right;
 It ain't their nat'ral way.
 But I want to find out, my lads,
 This stuff of which they tell;

For, if as it arn't meant to drink,
Why, it must be to smell."

"Says Tom, says he, "To drink or smell
I don't think this here's meant."

Says Jack, says he, "Blame my old eyes,
If I'll believe it's scent!"

"Well then," says Dick, "if that arn't square
It must be meant for meat;
So come along, my jovial mates,
To find what's good to eat!"

"They comed across a great green plant
A-growing tall and true;

Says Jack, says he, "I'm precious dry!"

And picked a leaf to chew;
While Tom takes up a sun-dried bit,
A-lying by the trees;
He rubs it in his hands to dust;
And then begins to sneeze.

"Another leaf picks messmate Dick,
And holds it in the sun;
Then rolls it up all neat and tight—
"My lads," says he, in fun,
I mean to cook this precious weed."
And then, from out his poke,
With burning-glass he lights the end,
And quick blows up the smoke.

"Says Jack, says he, "Of Paradise
I've heard some people tell."

Says Tom, says he, "This stuff will do,
Let's have another smell."

Says Dick, his face all pleasant smiles,
As from a cloud he roared,

"It strikes me here's the Capen bold,
To fetch us all aboard."

"Up comes brave Hawkins from the beach—
"Shiver my hull!" he cries,

"What's these here games, my merry men?"

And then—"Why, blame my eyes!
Here's one as chaws, and one as snuffs,
And t'other of the three

Is smoking like a chimbley-pot—
They've found out Tobac-kee."

"So if as ever you should hear
Of Raleigh, and them lies

About his sarvant and his pipe,

And him as "Fire!" cries—
You says as 'twas three mariners,

As sailed to Virgin-ee,
In brave old Hawkins' gallant ship,
Who found out Tobac-kee.

"A lurch to starboard—one to port—
Now forrard, boys, go we:

With a haul, and a ho! and a yo heave ho!
To find out Tobac-kee."

GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

By permission of the Author.

THE EXECUTION.

My Lord Tomnoddy got up one day;

It was half-past two, he had nothing to do,
So his Lordship rang for his cabriolet.

Tiger Tim was clean of limb,
His boots were polish'd, his jacket was trim;
With a very smart tie in his smart cravat,
And a smart cockade on the top of his hat;
Tallest of boys, or shortest of men,
He stood in his stockings just four foot ten;
And he ask'd, as he held the door on the swing,
"Pray, did your Lordship please to ring?"

My Lord Tomnoddy he raised his head,
And thus to Tiger Tim he said,

"Mahibran's dead, Duvernay's fled,
Taghoni has not yet arrived in her stead;
Tiger Tim, come, tell me true,
What may a nobleman find to do?"

Tim look'd up, and Tim look'd down,
He paused, and he put on a thoughtful frown,
And he held up his hat, and he peep'd in the
crown;

He bit his lip, and he scratch'd his head,
He let go the handle, and thus he said,
As the door, released, behind him bang'd:

"An't please you, my Lord, there's a man to be
hang'd."

My Lord Tomnoddy jumped up at the news,
"Run to McFuze, and Lieutenant Tregooze,
And run to Sir Carnaby Jenks, of the Blues.

Rope-dancers a score I've seen before—
But to see a man swing at the end of a string,
With his neck in a noose, will be quite a new
thing."

My Lord Tomnoddy stepped into his cab—

Dark rifle-green, with a lining of drab;

Through street and through square,

His high-trotting mare,

Like one of Ducrow's goes pawing the air.

Adown Piccadilly and Waterloo Place

Went the high-trotting mare at a very quick
pace;

She produced some alarm, but did no great
harm,

Save frightening a nurse with a child on her arm,
Spattering with clay two urchins at play,

Knocking down—very much to the sweeper's dis-
may—

An old woman who wouldn't get out of the way,
But eastward afar through Temple Bar,

My Lord Tomnoddy directs his car;

Never heeding their squalls,

Or their calls, or their howls,

And merely just catching a glimpse of St. Paul's,
Turns down the Old Bailey,

Where in front of the goal, he

Pulls up at the door of a gin-shop, and gaily

Cries, "What must I fork out to-night, my trump,
For the whole first floor of the Magpie and
Stump?"

The clock strikes twelve—it is dark midnight—
Yet the Magpie and Stump is one blaze of light,
The parties are met; the tables are set;
There is "punch," "cold *without*," "hot *with*,"
heavy wet,

Ale-glasses and jugs, and rummers and mugs,
And sand on the floor, without carpets or rugs,
Cold fowl and cigars, pickled onions in jars,
Welsh rabbits and kidneys—rare work for the
jaws;

And very large lobsters, with very large claws;
And there is McFuze, and Lieutenant Tregooze;
And there is Sir Carnaby Jenks, of the Blues,
All come to see "a man die in his shoes!"

The clock strikes one! supper is done,
And Sir Carnaby Jenks is full of his fun,
Singing "Jolly companions every one!"

My Lord Tomnoddy is drinking gin-toddy,
And laughing, at ev'rything, and ev'rybody.

The clock strikes two! and the clock strikes three!
"Who so merry, so merry as we?"

Save Captain McFuze, who is taking a snooze,
While Sir Carnaby Jenks is busy at work,
Blacking his face with a piece of burnt cock.

The clock strikes four!—round the debtors' door
Are gathered a couple of thousand or more;
As many await at the press-yard gate,
Till slowly its folding-doors open, and straight
The mob divides, and between their ranks
A wagon comes loaded with posts and with
planks.

The clock strikes five! the sheriffs arrive,
And the crowd is so great that the street seems
alive;

But Sir Carnaby Jenks blinks and winks,
A candle burns down in the socket, and stinks.
Lieutenant Tregooze is dreaming of Jews,
And acceptances all the bill-brokers refuse;

My Lord Tomnoddy has drunk all his toddy,
And just as the dawn is beginning to peep,
The whole of the party are fast asleep.

Sweetly, oh! sweetly, the morning breaks,
With roseate streaks,
Like the first faint blush on a maiden's cheeks,
Seem'd as that mild and clear blue sky
Smil'd upon all things far and high,
On all—save the wretch condemned to die!
Alack! that ever ~~so~~ fair a sun,
As that which its course has now begun,
Should rise on such a scene of misery!—
Should gild with rays so light and free
That dismal, dark-frowning gallows-tree!

And hark!—a sound comes, big with fate;
The clock from St. Sepulchre's tower strikes—
eight!—

List to that low funeral bell:
It is tolling, alas! a living man's knell!
And see!—from forth that open door
They come—*He* steps that threshold o'er
Who never shall tread upon threshold more!
Oh! 'tis a fearsome thing to see
That pale wan man's mute agony,
The glare of that wild, despairing eye,
Now bent on the crowd, now turn'd to the sky,
As though 'twere scanning, in doubt and in fear,
The path of the spirit's unknown career;
Those pinion'd arms, those hands that ne'er
Shall be lifted again—not even in prayer;
That heaving chest!—Enough—'tis done!
The bolt is fallen!—the spirit is gone!
For weal or for woe is known but to *One*!
Oh! 'twas a fearsome sight!—Ah me!
A deed to shudder at, not to see.

Again that clock! 'tis time, 'tis time!
The hour is past, with its earliest chime
The cord is sever'd, the lifeless clay
By "dungeon villains" is borne away:
Nine!—'twas the last concluding stroke,
And then—my Lord Tomnoddy awoke!
And Tregooze and Sir Carnaby Jenks arose,
And Captain McFuze with the black on his nose:
And they stared at each other as much as to say,

"Hallo! hallo! here's a rum go!
Why, Captain—my Lord!—here's the dickens to
pay!

The fellow's been cut down and taken away!
What's to be done? We've missed all the fun!
Why, they'll laugh at and quiz us all over the
town,

We are all of us done so uncommonly brown!"

What *was* to be done?—'twas perfectly plain
They could not well hang the man over again;
What *was* to be done?—the man was dead!
Nought *could* be done—nought could be said;
So my Lord Tomnoddy went home to bed!

R. H. BARHAM.

THE PLEASURES OF FISHING.

"A SPLENDID day, Jones!" says Bilston (I am
Bilston's guest), as I bid him good-morning. "A
perfect day; we couldn't have a better one."

When I awoke that morning, I had observed
with a feeling akin to relief that the Yorkshire
landscape was shrouded in mist, and that the
Yorkshire roads were canals of mud from the
drizzling rain, which had been falling steadily all
night, and was still coming down from a dull
murky sky.

"I hardly thought you would go to-day," I
reply, rather shamefacedly.

"Not go!" shrieks Bilston. "My dear man, I wouldn't stay at home on a day like this for fifty pounds."

A very modest consideration indeed would buy me off; but I am at Bilston's mercy. "A day's fishing" was one of the attractions held out for my visit, and I can't very well back out of it now; I can only hope that the parson, who has undertaken to drive us out, will have more sense than to come.

"Here's Middleby," says Bilston, rising from the table and going to the window.

The Rev. Mr. Middleby looks moist, but jubilant. "What a glorious day!" he says. "Are you ready?"

We are ready to start in a few minutes.

"Are you making a long stay down here?" asks the parson, as I climb into the dog-cart beside him.

"Only a few days," I reply, turning up my coat-collar.

"Then you *are* in luck," is the answer. "I may safely say that you might stay here a month without getting such another day as this."

"Is there much wading to do?" I ask carelessly.

"Oh no," says the parson. "You need seldom go in as high as your knees."

If the Rev. Mr. Middleby or any one else catches me immersed as far as my ankles, I shall be very much surprised.

* * * * *

We have left the trap at a roadside inn, and are standing on the bank getting our rods ready; or, to be strictly accurate, I am watching the parson's deft fingers lash wild-looking flies on to invisible gut with fearful and wonderful knots. I have been forced to consent to use flies; he won't hear of my fishing with a worm. It's awfully unsportsmanlike, he says; so I give in.

Bilston has started to walk up the road for a mile or two to a point whence he will fish down to us.

"There you are now!" says the parson. "You'll find a capital run a couple of hundred yards up; go and try a cast there, but mind the trees."

I'm by no means sure that I know what a "run" is, but take the rod from the parson's hand and start for my destination without acknowledging my ignorance. I daresay I shall know it by the trees I have been warned against; there are not many on the bank.

I make a very good commencement, and succeed in throwing the cast without catching the overhanging boughs. Now it is fairly in the water, I'll leave it there; I can't get into difficulties if I don't attempt too much. In the distance I can see the parson making throw after throw with the restless perseverance of an automaton. I conclude that is the proper way to fish with flies; but there

aren't any trees near him to interfere with his line. I did not think the flies looked particularly lifelike when I began, and evidently the trout don't think so either, for I have not even had a bite when the parson leaves his station and passes me on his way up-stream. I feel bound to make another cast as he stops to watch me.

"Your tackle is all mixed up," he says, as I make a graceful sweep with my rod.

"Ah, so it is; thank you. Didn't notice it; a little short-sighted," I reply disjointedly, and lay the rod down on the stones to clear the cast, which, now I come to look at it, has twisted itself into a collection of Gordian knots with a degree of talent I did not imagine two yards of gut possessed. I can't manage to unravel it completely, but get it into some sort of order, quite good enough to satisfy myself.

Bother the trees! Between the wind and the ridiculous flippancy of the rod, I have "hung myself up" (I understand this to be the correct expression). I can't tug the line down; and after a few trials, resign myself to a scramble up the wet slippery trunk. I cut away enough small branches to furnish a moderate-sized garden with pea-sticks, and as the last one falls, taking the cast with it, my new fishing-knife drops neatly into a black-looking pool below the roots of the tree. I use an expletive, and descend. It takes a good quarter of an hour to disengage the line from the twigs, and by that time the parson is well out of sight. Whatever mistake I may fall into next, I won't fish near trees, and choose a nice clear piece of water with no obstructions about it.

How on earth any fellow can throw a fly in the face of this wind, I do not know; I can't get mine into the water at all except by the most unscientific and violent thrashing. There! I knew that would happen; I'd have bet any money on it. The tail-fly has caught in my coat between the shoulders: I can't reach it; I can't pull it out; and it doesn't take me long to discover that I can't break the gut. I daresay a stout man pawing feebly at his own back to release his fishing-tackle makes a very humorous picture. But that doesn't reconcile me to the situation when a labourer with a face like a cod-fish stops to grin, and by-and-by laughs outright. (How awfully rude the lower classes are in Yorkshire!)

"Whoy don't thee tak off thoi cown, maan?" he says with contemptuous pity.

Happy thought! Why didn't it occur to me before? I strip off my "cown," and lay it on the grass; the hook is well in over the barb, and I can't withdraw it.

The labourer, who seems quite unnecessarily amused, comes to the rescue again. "Hast noa gotten a knife?" he asks.

I've lost mine, and tell him so—not how; and suffer him to operate on the cloth with an instru-

ment like a small carver. Clear again at last. My friend in need has gone on his way, having accepted a shilling for his services in cutting a large hole in my coat, which breathes a very perceptible odour of strong cheese.

I set to work again, and fish diligently for an hour without doing anything worthy of note. I may be wanting in science, but in patience I yield to no man, and I have always been taught that this virtue is the attribute most valuable to the fisherman. My toil is rewarded at last: a beautiful trout, nearly five inches long, takes one of the flies—I don't know which—and with a tremendous effort I swirl him out of the water, over my head, into a patch of furze-bushes. It is a little difficult to find him, for the hook came out as soon as he fell. I shan't abandon the search in a hurry. If a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, a trout in the furze is worth two in the stream, and I hunt carefully, regardless of prickles, until I find him. I wonder what he weighs, he can't be very heavy; but Bilston has brought his spring balance, so the fish can stay in my basket until I can weigh him at lunch-time. If it wasn't for the wind, I should get on capitally; but success has made me incautious, and before long a fly catches me somewhere again, not in my coat this time. Really, it is very awkward, a most embarrassing position if any one should happen to come this way. The hook has a frightfully sharp point, and tells me its exact locality if I make the slightest movement. What *am* I to do? It's all very well to take off one's coat in full sight of the public highway; but there's no knowing how long it may take to get the hook out without a knife, and I can't divest myself of this garment for an indefinite time; it's out of the question. Bother it all! here's somebody coming. I won't be caught in this predicament; and wet as the grass is, I sit down and pretend to examine my reel.

"Any sport?" asks the stranger.

"Not much," I reply, as serenely as can be expected of a man impaled on a fish-hook.

"Too cold?" he suggests after a very long pause. He hasn't much to say, but takes a very long time to say it, and is exasperatingly slow about moving off. He is out of sight at last, and I secure a couple of large stones to break the gut with. I bruise my fingers, lose my temper, and make awful havoc of the tackle before I get free, but it is done eventually, and I apply myself to piecing the fragments together again. It doesn't look quite right, somehow, when I have completed the repairs. The top fly is only six inches from the silk line, and the next one hangs about a foot below that; thereafter is a four-foot strand of plain gut, unencumbered by hooks, for the other fly clings unlovingly to my trousers.

The rain has passed off, and the sun is growing hot. Bilston said he was afraid the drizzle would not last all day. I can't say I regret it, though

the change seems unfavourable to fishing, for another hour's assiduous work is unproductive of results. I must say I get on better without that tail-fly; there's nothing to catch in the trees and check one's freedom of action in making casts. It is past one o'clock; I shall stop and walk up to meet Bilston and the lunch. I go a good mile and a half before I descri my seat in the shade on the other side of the river, beside the parson, both of them busy with knives and flasks.

"Hillo, Jones!" shouts Bilston. "Come along. You'll find a safe place to cross if you go fifty yards higher up, just round that bend."

The place doesn't look very safe when I reach it, and nothing but hunger would urge me to try a crossing. As I have hinted before, I am a stout man, and start on a series of perilous leaps from rock to rock, with my heart in my mouth. I'm half-way over, and the widest leap has to be taken; the rock I'm standing on is awfully slippery, and the water looks unpleasantly deep. I screw up my courage and jump—into the brown stream nearly up to the waist! I don't want the friendly help of the stepping-stones now, and drag myself to the bank, which I gain with my boots full of water, and the horribly uncomfortable feeling a man has after taking a bath in his clothes. What humbug it is to call this fishing business an amusement! Disgusting!

The parson has finished his lunch and is counting the basket when I arrive. "Undersized," he says severely to Bilston, holding up a fish much larger than the one in my basket. "I thought you knew that the limit on this water is eight inches."

Bilston asks if it isn't eight inches long, with the uneasily innocent air of a man pretending that he thinks he has done no wrong.

"A short seven," says the parson, throwing the trout back into the water.—"I ought to have told you there's a penalty of two guineas for taking undersized fish, Mr. Jones," he adds, turning to me: "the keepers are very stringent about it too, and quite rightly."

I wish I had left my capture in the furze-bush, and register a vow to throw it away as soon as I can without being seen. I'm no judge of length, but if the trout in my basket is five inches long, I shall be astonished.

"You haven't spared yourself, old man," says Bilston, surveying my wet clothes; "but it was hardly worth while wading so far as that."

Shall I tell him that I tumbled in, or let him suppose that I've been standing in the water almost up to my middle all day, in my zeal for sport? Looks well to have been working hard, though I have nothing to show for it.

"I hadn't much luck," I say, throwing down my rod: "the only one I got was a small one."

The parson glares hard at my tackle, and then gets up to inspect it. "Not surprising, if you've been fishing with this," he remarks dryly.

"I lost the other fly," I falter, turning to receive a packet of sandwiches from Bilston. I feel that the parson's searching eyes are upon me, and don't feel at all happy.

"Shall I take this off for you?" he says, taking the gut of that tenacious "tail-fly" in his fingers and giving it a gentle pull.

"Funny way to lose a fly," says Bilston gravely, as he sees what the Rev. Mr. Middleby is doing.

I am bad at fibbing—notoriously unsuccessful with what people call the "ready lie"; but it did occur to me as soon as I had spoken that it would have been as well not to have said that I didn't know it was there.

Bilston echoes, "Didn't know it was there!" and breaks into a vulgarly loud roar of laughter. I stand looking foolish whilst the parson cuts out the hook in stern silence. He is an enthusiast himself, and doesn't seem pleased.

"If your friend doesn't care about fishing, perhaps we had better go home," he says to Bilston.

"Oh! but he does," says my host, choking down his risibility with an effort.—"Don't you, Jones?"

Regardless of the most elementary principles of truth, I solemnly aver that I know no sport like it (I hope I never shall), and that trout-fishing is a passion of mine. I attack the lunch, and Mr. Middleby, who is as good-natured as he is earnest, sets to work to readjust my tackle, whilst Bilston leans against a tree, smoking, with his hat resting on his eyebrows.

"Here's the head-keeper," says the parson in an undertone; "it's lucky I threw away that little one you had."

Bilston nods seriously, and having a clear conscience, gives the keeper a hearty "good-day."

"Day, gen'lemen," says the keeper pleasantly. "Any sport to-day, gen'lemen?"

This is awful! My companions promptly respond to the question by turning out their baskets on the grass. It is evidently a civil way of asking to examine the catch. He doesn't seem to notice me as I sit in the background with my basket behind me. I certainly won't volunteer to display its contents; my fish would be worth its weight in gold to him, very nearly.

The keeper turns over the little heap of trout with his stick. "All right, Mr. Bilston, sir.—A awful hot day, sir."

A brilliant idea strikes me: I will make friends with the keeper. Perhaps he may put me up to a wrinkle or two by which I may redeem my character in the parson's eyes, if I have to go on with this wretched fishing business all the afternoon. I'll offer the keeper a drink: that's what he's hating at.

"Have a nip of whisky, keeper?" I say with condescending affability, pulling round my basket in momentary obliviousness of the solitary companion my flask has therein.

"Thank'ee sir; much obliged.—Teetot'ler, sir,"

says the man in velveteen. "'Ope you 'ave 'ad some sport, too, sir?"

Oh, why didn't I hold my tongue? Why did I go and offer him a drink he didn't want? He comes over to my side as I try to shuffle the basket out of sight, pretending I didn't hear him, and coolly kneels down at my side in readiness to examine the dozens of fish his manner seems to indicate he is sure I have caught.

It is no use denying it; he mightn't believe me, and that would complicate matters. I pull the basket round again, and he opens it wide whilst I stare blankly at the top of his weather-beaten hat. It takes him fully half a minute to search that basket; and I'm beginning to hope that the fish may have tumbled out when I fell into the stream, but presently he emits a low chuckle, and draws out the now stiff and unwholesome-looking victim of my skill. He sits back on his heels, looking from it to me and from me to it again. My condescending affability is all gone. I hope I don't look so foolishly small as I feel. The keeper shakes his head solemnly, and coughs.

"This 'ere fish is hunder size, sir," he observes at length.

"I didn't know how the——"

"The fine for takin' hunder-size fish is two guineas, sir," he continues without noticing my interruption. "Is lordship likewise gives 'arf the fine to us if we catches gen'lemen takin' such trout, sir;" and the hardened ruffian smiles softly as he turns the sorry object about in his hands.

"What does this mean?" I demanded savagely of the parson.

"The keeper is quite right," says the Rev. Mr. Middleby. "If you make a row about it, he'll just report the matter, and our leave to fish here will be withdrawn."

"I oughter report it," says the keeper, doubtfully, as he gets on his feet.

For myself, I shouldn't much care if he did, but I can't get Bilston into trouble, and deprive him of the "amusement" he takes such unaccountable delight in. I swallow my wrath and look hard at the keeper; he must be a thought-reader, for he smiles again, knowingly this time.

"Don't report anything about it; I'll settle with you," I say, and in desperation I force a sovereign into his hand. He doesn't look quite satisfied; so now, quite reckless, I add three half-crowns. That soothes the keeper's conscience.

"You may 'ave the fish, sir, if you wishes; it's dead," he says, politely tendering it by the tail. (What tactless people one does meet at times!) I snatch the nasty thing from his hand and throw it into the river with a snort of rage. The keeper touches his hat and retires. Bilston, who has been grinning like a *Cheshire cat* the time, composes his features. Heartless fellow that Bilston! I don't see anything funny about it. One pound seven shillings and sixpence for that—that reptile

I have just thrown away; not counting that other shilling I paid the labourer this morning. I suppose I look as if I was going to use bad language, for the parson gets up hurriedly and goes to the river-bank out of hearing.

"A very expensive trout that," says Bilston gravely.

But I am too angry to reply, too thoroughly annoyed even to tell him that if ever I want a fish of any kind or size again I will buy it in a civilised fashion.

N.B.—I have given away my rod.

By permission of Messrs. W. & R. CHAMBERS.

THE OLD BANNER.

THE poor old banner! Give it here, I say!
Though Church and King are toppling to their fall;

I saved it from the Roundheads, anyway,
When black Long Marston made an end of all.
Why could not Rupert keep his squadrons back?
Un-breathed, they might have broken Cromwell's line,

But scattered far on flying Leslie's track!
Ah! staunch and true it stood, that troop of mine.

What boots it now, when every oak is down,
And even the great seal ring my father gave,
Melted with all the rest to help the Crown?
The old man willed it, speaking from the grave.
Thank God, that I have neither wife nor son
To perish in the ruin we have wrought.
Poor Katie! waiting till the game is won!
Well, here's her flag, from its last battle brought!

Her deft hands brodered it. Blood-stained and rent

It hangs about the staff. Why, who could guess
How gallantly to the gay breeze it bent,
All gold and glitter, when, amid the press
Of shouting cavaliers, I flung it forth,
And Katie clapped her little hands to see
How bravely the battalions of the North
Around her banner marched to Victory.

To Victory! The Ouse runs swoll'n and red,
Sullenly sweeping to the angry main,
With the best blood of bonnie Yorkshire fed,
For on her banks knights fell like autumn grain.

Well, life will scarce be long, or axe and block,
Or starving 'mid the Frenchmen—which were best?

O comrades, slain in fiery battle shock,
I would my time were come to join your rest!

So to the vaults I'll leave my flag in trust
To all our long line, wrapt in dreamless sleep.
I shall not lie amid ancestral dust,
Nor kin nor vassal live my rites to keep.
And better so! I'll place my treasure close
Beneath my father's blazoned coffin-lid,
And when, anon, the rebels sack our house,
They'll miss, perchance, a prize so grimly hid.

There's just one diamond left that claspt my plume,
Take it to my bright lady's feet, and tell,
I leave her banner in my father's tomb,
I leave my heart to her, and so, farewell!
Whether to die 'mid clashing bow and bill,
Or rot in prison, like some noisome thing,
Or make my last short shrift on Tower Hill:
Who knows, who cares? Not I! God save the King!

SUSAN K. PHILLIPS.

By permission of the Author.

"SOUND AND FURY."

WHEN the Monolith nods in its lair,
When the butterfly chirps to the drone,
When Asbestos has buried its care,
'Neath the oval philosopher's stone;

Oh, then wreathe the daffodil's song,
Round the walrus' pale dappled brow,
While whispering whartles all throng,
To the honey-flecked juniper bough.

And if the weird Plethora's mate
Should creep to the Cacophony's niece,
These tortuous woodbines are straight,
And the dawn of the Dodo is peace.

Opodeldoc is melting to curd,
And far on the Caspian Sea
The pale crescent moon may be heard,
In her hundred and third apogee.

Loud sings the Mohurum in glee,
And his Saraband wanes up aloft;
"Si Tityre tu patulae,
Recubans sub tegmine" soft?

* * * * *

Do you think there is sense in my lay?
Do you think there is wisdom in me?
If you do, and you do, I dare say,
Why, then, what big fools you must be!

CHARLES COLLETTE.

By permission of the Author.

PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

THE scene of the following little domestic comedy was the parlour of a newly-married couple who, although still living under the influence of their recent honeymoon, were not wholly free from the enjoyment of a convivial relaxation. The persons represented were alone. Silence reigned supreme. The husband looked vacantly into the fireplace, and the wife alternately played with the plain gold circlet which she wore upon her "marriage finger," and punctuated the monotonous ticking of the clock with a wearisome yawn.

Benedict first broke the stillness: "I have an idea, my darling."

"Where?" yawned his wife.

"In my head, of course; where else do you suppose a man carries his ideas?"

"I didn't know, dear. I thought you might possibly have brought one home from the City with the evening paper."

"Sarcasm does not become you. My ideas are those of no ordinary man. I have been suddenly struck——"

"Oh, where?" anxiously interrupted our heroine.

"In my head with an idea. Listen, my love. The drama was my *forte*; I should have gone upon the stage; I should have devoted my years to the regeneration of my fellow-men; I should have played Hamlet, Othello, Romeo, and Shylock; I should have starred London—but it is not yet too late."

By this time Mr. Bancroft Smith had not only risen from his chair, but had actually completed the length of the room no less than three times. There was not the smallest shadow of doubt that he meant what he said, for his appearance denoted not only that of a newly-married man sitting down to all the fearful realities of unromantic wedlock—but a raving lunatic of the deadliest description.

"Bring forth my helmet, buckle on my armour, and hand me my battle-axe!" he shouted.

"Sit down, Bancroft," retorted his wife, "and don't make a fool of yourself. The people next door will think you have taken leave of your senses."

"Do not interrupt me, woman. I have the idea, the drama has settled in upon my brain and 'Richard is himself again.'"

"But how are you going to do it, my love—the idea, I mean? I hope you don't wish me to understand that this conduct is your idea."

"Bella," said Smith, as he resumed his seat and stroked his dissipated hair smooth—"Bella, forgive the impetuosity with which I have unburdened to you my secret, my discovery, my idea. You remember before we were engaged I was considered one of the best in the Greengrocers' and Chandlers' Dramatic Company; remember the glorious notices I received in the *Town Budget* and *Local Scourer*; recall the time when I played

Claude Melnotte with Miss Potts as Pauline; remember, I say, when the house rose to applaud me as Captain Ginger of the Bungleshire Buffs in "Weak Women"—recollect all this and much more, and say am I not destined to add another glorious name to the annals of the drama? Answer me, Bella, as you love me!"

"I am sure, Bancroft, if I had known it would have been like this I should never have married you. You as Melnotte! Why, you looked like the butcher in a fit; and I am sure that girl Potts made love as no lady would."

"And you said then I was perfection. Woman, you are a delusion. But I will not harm you. I have thought out a little comedy we can produce over old Jones's shop. I have the entire cast in my head. I shall play the hero; his name is Horatio the Brave. He is in love with the heroine; her name is Geraldine the Tearful. Then there is a character that will suit you admirably; you can play the servant and bring in a letter."

"Bancroft, now I know you are mad. Do you suppose that I would play the part of a servant? Do you imagine for a moment that I, Mrs. Bancroft Smith, would play second, third, or fourth fiddle to my husband? Absurd! And who do you suppose is going to play Geraldine the Fearful, or whoever she is?"

"The Tearful, Geraldine the Tearful, Bella. Ah, there is the difficulty. Of course, you couldn't; you are too stout. Then your voice is against you. Your whole carriage would be quite unsuited to the part."

"Bancroft, you wretch, before we were married you told me I had the finest figure in the world. You are a—— There, but I will spare you."

"Yes, yes, my love; but you know I was blind then—blindly in love, I mean. But let us discuss this play of mine."

"Silence, monster! I throw up the part of the slavey."

"Oh," said Bancroft, "you are going to be mad, are you?"

"Away! false one! away! Vanish into the gloom whence thou camest! Avant, and quit my sight; the desert hide thee!"

"Was there ever any lunacy in your family, Bella? But listen. With regard to my forthcoming production, if you will not take the part of Lottie, the servant, I must get Mrs. James's housemaid to do it. In the first act I kiss her——"

"Bancroft, I have changed my mind; I shall play the servant."

"Then," continued Smith, "there is the difficulty about the heroine, Geraldine. Her part, too, wants doing. She embraces me in the second act, faints in my arms in the third, and we are married in the fourth—only dramatically married, of course."

"Bancroft, I don't like this play of yours."

"I think," resumed Bancroft, "that our little friend over the way would do well for the widow."

"To whom do you allude, sir?"

"Why, to the little widow, who——"

"Silence, sir," said his wife, as the fearful reality at last dawned upon her. "I shall play Geraldine, the widow, the servant, the housemaid—anything, everything. I have the drama running through every fibre of my body. I feel now I can act—I was born an actress. I shall stir the town. My name will be before the public as the greatest tragedienne of the century. Away! Bancroft. I am inspired; I am inflated—away!"

P. J. COOKE.

By permission of the Author.

HOW THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT.

I SPRANG to the stirrup, and Joris, and he;
I galloped, Dirck galloped, we galloped all three;
"Good speed!" cried the watch, as the gate-bolts
undrew;

"Speed!" echoed the wall to us galloping through;
Behind shut the postern, the lights sank to rest,
And into the midnight we galloped abreast.

Not a word to each other; we kept the great
pace
Neck by neck, stride by stride, never changing our
place;

I turned in my saddle and made its girths tight,
Then shortened each stirrup, and set the pique
right,
Rebuckled the cheek-strap, chained slacker the bit,
Nor galloped less steadily Roland a whit.

'Twas moonset at starting; but while we drew
near
Lockeren, the cocks crew, and twilight dawned
clear;

At Boom, a great yellow star came out to see;
At Duffeld, 'twas morning as plain as could be;
And from Mechelm church-steeple we heard the

So Joris broke silence with "Yet there is time!"

At Aerschot, up leaped of a sudden the sun,
And against him the cattle stood black every one,
To stare through the mist at us galloping past,
And I saw my stout galloper Roland at last,
With resolute shoulders, each butting away
The haze, as some bluff river headland its spray.

And his low head and crest, just one sharp ear
bent back
For my voice, and the other perched out on his
track;

And one eye's black intelligence—ever that
glance

O'er its white edge at me, his own master,
askance!

And the thick heavy spume-flakes, which eye and
anon

His fierce lips shook upwards in galloping on.

By Hasselt, Dirck groaned; and cried Joris, "Stay
spur!"

Your Ross galloped bravely, the fault's not in her,
We'll remember at Aix"—for one heard the quick
wheeze

Of her chest, saw her stretched neck and stagger-
ing knees,

And sunk tail, and horrible heave of the flank,
As down on her haunches she shuddered and
sank.

So we were left galloping, Joris and I,
Past Looz and past Tongres, no cloud in the sky;
The broad sun above laughed a pitiless laugh,
'Neath our feet broke the brittle-bright stubble
like chaff;

Till over by Dalhem a dome-spire sprang white,
And "Gallop!" gasped Joris, "for Aix is in sight!"

"How they'll greet us!" and all in a moment his
roan

Rolled neck and crop over, lay dead as a stone;
And there was my Roland to bear the whole

weight
Of the news which alone could save Aix from her
fate.

With his nostrils like pits, full of blood to the
brim,

And with circles of red for his eye-sockets' rim.

Then I cast loose my buff-coat, each holster let
fall,

Shook off both my jack-boots, let go belt and all,
Stood up in the stirrup, leaned, patted his ear,

Called my Roland his pet-name, my horse without
peer;

Clapped my hands, laughed and sang, any noise,
bad or good,

Till at length into Aix Roland galloped and
stood.

And all I remember is, friends flocking around
As I sat with his head 'twixt my knees on the
ground;

And no voice but was praising this Roland of
mine,

As I poured down his throat our last measure of
wine,

Which (the burgesses voted by common consent)
Was no more than his due who brought good news.
from Ghent.

ROBERT BROWNING.

By permission of Messrs. CHAPMAN & HALL.

WEDDING BELLS.

WANDERING away on tired feet,
 Away from the close and crowded street,
 Away from the city's smoke and din,
 Trying to flee from it and sin;
 Faded shawl and faded gown,
 Unsmoothed hair of a golden brown,
 Eyes once bright
 With joyous light,
 In shame cast down
 'Neath the scorn and frown
 Of those who had known her in days that were flown.
 The same blue eyes—the abode of tears,
 The once light heart—the abode of fears,
 While dark despair came creeping in,
 And she fled from the city's smoke and din,
 With a yearning sigh
 And a heart-sick cry—
 "Oh, to wander away and die!
 God, let me die on my mother's grave,
 'Tis the only boon I dare to crave."
 And she struggled on,
 With a weary moan,
 In the noonday heat,
 From the dusty street;
 And they turned to gaze on the fair young face,
 And marvelled much at her beauty and grace;
 What cared they if her heart was aching?
 How knew they that her heart was breaking?
 Forth from the west the red light glowed,
 And the weary feet still kept on the road,
 Wand'ring on in the golden sheen,
 Where the country lanes were fresh and green.
 The red light gleamed on the village tower,
 And lit up the clock at the sunset hour;
 And still her cry
 Was, "Oh, to die!
 God, let me die on my mother's grave,
 'Tis the only boon I care to crave."
 The sun uprose, and the light of day
 Brightly scattered the clouds of grey;
 And the village was gay,
 For a holiday.
 Merrily echoed the old church bells,
 Peal on peal, o'er the hills and dells;
 Borne away on the morning breeze,
 Over the moorland, over the leas;
 Back again with a joyous clang!
 Merrily, merrily, on they rang!
 But they woke her not, she slumbered on,
 With her head laid down on the cold grey stone.
 The village was bright
 In the glad some light,
 And the village maidens were clad in white,
 As side by side
 They merrily hied,
 In gay procession to meet the bride;
 Strewing the path of the village street
 With choicest flowers for her dainty feet.

A joyful peal of the bells again,
 To proclaim the return of the bridal train;
 A louder peal from the old church tower
 (As the bride passes on through the floral bower,
 With the bridegroom happy, tender and gay),
 And the echoes are carried away, away;
 But they linger awhile o'er the tombstones grey;
 And the sleeper awakes with a yearning cry—
 "Oh, to die, to die!
 God, let me die on my mother's grave,
 'Tis all my broken heart can crave."
 And she lays her head again on the stone,
 With a long-drawn breath and a sobbing moan;
 While the bridal train (with many a thought
 Unspoken of omens with evil fraught)
 Sweep down the path from the old church door;
 And the bells' glad music is wafted once more
 Over the moorland, over the heath,
 But they wake her not, for her sleep is death.

Why does the bridegroom's cheek turn pale?
 Why in his eye such a look of bale?
 Why does he totter, then quicken his pace
 As he catches a glimpse of the poor, dead face?
 Oh, woe betide
 That so fair a bride,
 As she who steps with such grace by his side,
 Should have faced grim Death on her wedding
 day!
 Did trus thought trouble the bridegroom gay
 And dash from his eye the glad light away?
 I wist not, for never a word he spoke,
 And soon from his face the troubled look
 Was gone, and he turned to his beautiful bride
 With a radiant smile and a glance of pride;
 And his eye was bright
 And his step was light,
 As would beseem, with her by his side.
 Oh, his smile is glad, and his heart is brave!
 What cares he for the dead in the grave?
 The faded shawl and faded gown,
 The unsmoothed hair of golden brown?
 Why should the face on the tombstone grey
 Trouble him so on his wedding day?
 Forgotten words that were long since spoken,
 Thoughts of vows that were made to be broken?
 Fling them away!
 Be joyous and gay!
 Death will never a secret betray.

Quaff the red wine, the glasses ring;
 Drink! till the gloomy thoughts take wing;
 Drink, and be merry, merry and glad!
 With a bride so lovely who would be sad?
 Hark! how the wedding bells are ringing!
 Over the hills their echoes flinging;
 Carried away on the morning breeze
 Over the moorland, over the leas,
 Riding away on the zephyr's wing—
 Joyously, merrily, on they ring,
 But she will not wake, her sleep is deep,
 And Death can ever a secret keep.

Ah, thy smile may be glad, and thy heart may be brave,

And the secret kept betwixt thee and the grave;
But should'st thou forget it for one short day,
In the gloom of night from the tombstone grey

Will come the sound of a wailing cry—

“Oh, to die! oh, to die!”

And the bride at thy bosom will raise her head
In affright, as she hears thee call on the dead
In a ghastly dream, on whose wings are borne
The memories of thy wedding morn!

Oh, the woful sight of the pale dead face!
With the cold dank stone for its resting-place;
Oh, the mocking chime of the old church bell!
It shall seem to peal from the mouth of hell;
Into thy dreams its echoes flinging,
Merrily, madly, ceaselessly ringing!

The white face shall haunt thee!

The bells they shall taunt thee!

Echoed and tossed on the withering breath
Of a curse that shall cling round they soul till
death!

CHARLOTTE M. GRIFFITHS.

By permission of the Author.

DEFYING THE LIGHTNING.

THERE was a time when I had a great fancy for artists—painters of pictures, I mean.

An artist, in my mind's eye, always wore a sort of halo—a halo as big as he could get through an ordinary-sized door with.

I revered the whole brotherhood of Art, and would have stood them “Keating's Powder,” “Pears Soap,” or anything else that didn't cost much, and was likely to add to their comfort.

I combined business with friendship (I forgot to mention that I am a money-lender). They did me in oils; I did them in money matters. They took me, and I had them in all sorts of different ways. Generally I had the best of the bargain, but once it was the other way.

He was a very clever artist, but eccentric.

I had lent him a good bit of money, and he didn't seem to hurry himself about paying it back.

I began to get rather nervous about it, so I suggested that he should paint me in some negotiable attitude, so that by framing and disposing of the work I could get back my advance.

He agreed, and made an appointment for a sitting at his studio. He told me not to trouble about costume, as he would see to all that.

I kept the appointment.

It was a bleak winter's day, with snow on the ground, and a keen east wind blowing. But I was well wrapped up, and I didn't mind.

I found my artist wearing a large straw hat, and smoking a cigar in front of a small canvas.

“Aha!” he said; “I'm delighted to see you! Your complexion isn't so clear as it might be, but we'll put that right in a minute or two. Just take a little of this!”

And before I knew what I was doing, I had swallowed half-a-tumbler of the nastiest physic I ever tackled.

He remarked that the drawing would occupy the first few days, but by the time he got to colouring me I should have a complexion like a hair-dresser's wax figure.

I don't know that I particularly wanted to have a complexion like a hairdresser's wax figure, but as I had taken the potion it was not worth while arguing the point.

“Now,” he said, “we'll begin. Take your things off!”

“Take my things off?”

“Why, certainly,” he said; “I propose to do you as Ajax. You don't suppose I can paint a Grecian warrior in a billycock hat and a thirty shilling suit!”

I didn't know enough of the classics to feel safe in discussing the question, so I undressed.

It seemed like preparing for a morning dip in the Serpentine, only that there was no water.

He put me first in one position, then in another, but always in a draught, “to try the light,” he said.

Just as he had finally placed me near the door, with the small of my back to the keyhole, the maid-servant entered with a tradesman's circular.

I flew behind a looking-glass until she had gone.

He told her to take my clothes away and brush them.

Not knowing who might come in next, and beginning moreover to feel chilly, I inquired if Ajax didn't usually wear something?

He said, “Only when he went to battle.”

I told him, “In that case I would rather be taken going to battle.”

He said I was supposed to be defying the lightning, but I could have the clothes if I liked.

I replied, without hesitation, that I would, but I was a little disappointed with the result. The whole concern only consisted of a breastplate, helmet, and sword.

They were effective to look at, no doubt, but somehow I didn't experience that glow of warmth one expects from a suit of clothes.

I suggested that he might stir the fire a little bit. He did so, and put it out. Whereupon he enveloped himself in a fur-lined coat and continued to gaze alternately at me and at the canvas.

I asked him if it was nearly finished.

He replied that he hadn't commenced yet. The light was all right, but I didn't look defiant enough.

“You let your teeth chatter too much,” he said, “and you look too much on the ground! You are defying the lightning, remember, not glow-worms or cabbage-stalks.”

He raised my chin with the end of his maulstick, and I savagely defied a rent in his shabby old curtains for about ten minutes, when I told him I really couldn't hold up my arm any longer.

"Don't move!" he said, "I'll fix it for you!" and he kindly tied it to a piece of string suspended from the ceiling.

Just as he had got it in the right position, the clock struck, and he said he must go to his luncheon. He was sorry he couldn't invite me to join him, but eating would spoil my figure, and destroy the line of beauty about the waist.

He was very particular that I shouldn't move while he was away, as it would spoil the pose, but I managed to get a peep over the top of the canvas, and found he had done nothing.

When he came back I told him I really couldn't keep in the same position any longer.

He replied that he was afraid I hadn't sufficient enthusiasm for "Ajax," and that he would do me as the "Dying Gladiator" instead.

"You won't find that so fatiguing," he remarked, "because you can't die on your stomach or your back, or any way you like. I'm glad I thought of the gladiator"—he continued, calmly lighting a cigar. "The blue colour your limbs are assuming will suggest death remarkably well."

I told him I felt half dead already.

"That's right!" he said, cheerfully; "we shall make a success this time!"

I thought it was my only chance of getting my money back, so I assumed as comfortable a dying position on the floor as circumstances and the costume permitted, when the maid-servant returned with my things and fled with a shriek.

He said it was my fault for trying to get up, and thereby drawing attention to myself. "You have spoilt the pose of the gladiator, but I'll do you as Mercury," he said. "You would make a lovely Mercury!"

"Did Mercury wear trousers?" I inquired. "No!" he said; but I could have a mustard plaster on my chest, if I liked.

This was too much! I put on my clothes and fled. He wanted me to appoint another sitting, but I declined. No more classic portraiture for me!

ROBERT GANTHONY.

From PICK-ME-UP.

By permission of the Proprietors.

THE STROLLERS.

THE little village, all astir,
Has turned out to a man to greet them!
And anxious urchins, wide awake,
Run down the leafy lanes to meet them;
The crone who basks her wintry hair
Half hidden in a russet hood,

Looks up and wisely shakes her head,
And murmurs, "Player folk no good!"
The sturdy, clay-streaked ploughmen pause,
As two by two the strollers pass,
And wonder if the Squire will swear
At folks who "furret up his grass."
The busybodies of the place
Watch as the bills are posted there,
And know exactly who these are,
And how they've seen them at the Fair.
How "him, the thin one walking yon—
Him with the lass that moves so slow,
And leads the child with golden hair,
Had played in Lunnun years ago!
And though their faces seem so wan,
Them, too, could play the King and Queen,
And look, ah! mortal fine at night!"

Then slowly wags the lumbering cart,
Then slowly rises stage and tent,
And through the cracks of yawning planks
Sly youngsters peep in wonderment.
And ere the sun has quite gone down,
The band—a fiddle, horn, and drum—
Perambulate the lane, and urge
Reluctant villagers to come.
Whilst, ere they play kings, queens, and knaves,
And ere one-half the seats are taken,
The company has sallied forth
To buy their humble eggs and bacon.
What if they strut, and fume, and make
Sad havoc with the text and action,
They have their mystery, their fame,
And "give their patrons satisfaction."
And children point, and wonder how
That stooping man with face so long,
With husky cough, and dragging gait,
"Be chap as sang that funny song!"
And that same meagre figure there,
So wan, so broken, and so mild?
Could be the haughty tyrant king
Who slew his wife, and cursed his child!
Ah! little fleeting fame ye seek!
And little fleeting means of life!
Too little for the hard-worked man,
Too little for the ailing wife.
No wonder if the tyrant seems
So stern, so bony, and so gaunt;
No wonder if his captive acts
And "looks" so well disease and want!
The Ghost is half-way to his grave,
And weakness gives his measured walk,
And poor Ophelia's face is pale
Without the adventitious chalk.
The testy dotard of the stage,
The "heavy father" as they say,
Is heavy only in his heart,
Nor wants a wig to make him gray.
And he, whom vacant hands applaud,
And roar at ere his jest is sped,

May have his private tragedy,
And scarce a place to lay his head.
Ah! pardon all their little faults,
For the great woes they struggle through;
And when you quit the booth to-night,
Pray God to bless the strollers too!

ROBERT REECE.

By permission of the Author.

VIDE-VICI-AUDIVI.

THE ship lay anchored, and the sails were furled:

"Tell me, bronzed seaman (but no long bow draw),

In all your wanderings round the wondrous world,

Which was the fairest sight you ever saw?"

He laughed; then gave his nether garb a hitch;

"The fairest sight? that, sir, is easily told.

It was a winter midnight, black as pitch,

The water three feet deep within the hold.

"Choked were the pumps; then one huge wallowing wave

Shattered the deck-house sheer off from the deck,

And crashed the compass: our crew's hearts were brave,

But all hope fled to save our ship from wreck.

"Then suddenly in the clouds a rift—a flaw,

Down gleamed a star upon the blinding foam;

The fairest sight, sir, that I ever saw,

Was that bright star that steered us safely home."

"Tell me, brave soldier (for your breast is starred
With glory from the foes your valour slew),

In all brave fights wherein your strong arm warred,

What was the proudest hour you ever knew?"

"The proudest hour? We fought from morn till night;

The plain was purple with the gory dead;

My sword was blunt with slaughter: the fierce fight,

From heel to helm, had dyed my body red.

"It was a glorious victory for us:

I felled two foemen with one mighty blow,

For the red fight made me blood-ravenous,

And giant-strong: the enemy lay low.

"Back, through heaped dead, we galloped to the town,

When lo! before us, on the bloody track,
Stood four of ~~the~~ enemy. We were charging down,

A dozen strong: 'Hold off, my men: stand back,

"We are three to one!" their captain heard me call.

I saw his faint eyes fill with tearful dew:

"Bless you, brave soldier, and brave enemy all!"

That was the proudest hour I ever knew!"

"Tell me, musician (for your lute-stringed heart
Hath ever to sweet music, echoing, stirred),
Of all sweet sounds in which your soul had part,

What was the sweetest sound you ever heard?"

"The sweetest sound? It was on Easter day,
A Sabbath morn, that all in sunshine smiled;

The church-bells chimed: I rose and passed to pray,

And with me to the church, I brought my child.

"The long aisle trembled to the sounding psalm,
The great church shook beneath the organ's roll,

The soft hymn soared, perfumed with incense-balm,

Like wings that bore to God my tranced soul:

"The white-robed choir, like choirs of cherubim
Chanted; when lo! by Heaven's first rapture stirred,

I heard my child's voice blend with the soft hymn;

That was the sweetest sound I ever heard!"

SAMUEL K. COWAN, M.A.

By permission of the Author.

SCENE FROM "THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL."

[SIR PETER TEAZLE discovered.]

SIR P. When an old bachelor marries a young wife, what is he to expect? 'Tis now above six months since my Lady Teazle made me the happiest of men, and I have been the most miserable dog ever since! We tifted a little going to church, and fairly quarrelled before the bells were done ringing. I was more than once nearly choked with gall during the honeymoon; and had lost every satisfaction in life before my friends had done wishing me joy. And yet I chose with caution a girl bred wholly in the country, who had never known luxury beyond one silk gown, or dissipation beyond the annual gala of a race-ball. Yet now she plays her part in all the extravagant fopperies of the town, with as good a grace as if she had never seen a bush or a grass-plot out of Grosvenor Square. I am sneered at by all my acquaintance—paragraphed in the newspapers—she dissipates my fortune, and contradicts all my humours. And yet, the worst of it is, I doubt I

love her, or I should never bear all this—but I am determined never to let her know it. No, no, no! Oh, here she comes.

[Enter LADY TEAZLE.]

Lady Teazle, Lady Teazle, I won't bear it.

LADY T. Very well, Sir Peter, you may bear it or not, just as you please; but I know I ought to have my own way in everything; and what's more, I will.

SIR P. What, madam! is there no respect due to the authority of a husband?

LADY T. Why, don't I know that no woman of fashion does as she is bid after her marriage? Though I was bred in the country, I'm no stranger to that. If you wanted me to be obedient, you should have adopted me, and not married me. I'm sure you're old enough.

SIR P. Ay, there it is! Oons, madam, what right have you to run into all this extravagance?

LADY T. I'm sure I'm not more extravagant than a woman of quality ought to be.

SIR P. 'Slife, madam, I'll have no more sums squandered away upon such unmeaning luxuries. You have as many flowers in your dressing-room as would turn the Pantheon into a green-house, or make a fête champêtre at a masquerade.

LADY T. O, Sir Peter, how can you be angry at my little elegant expenses?

SIR P. Had you any of those little elegant expenses when you married me?

LADY T. Very true, indeed; and, after having married you, I should never pretend to taste again.

SIR P. Very well, very well, madam! You have entirely forgotten what your situation was when I first saw you.

LADY T. No, no; I have not; a very disagreeable situation it was, or I'm sure I never would have married you.

SIR P. You forget the humble state I took you from—the daughter of a poor country squire. When I came to your father's, I found you sitting at your tambour, in a linen gown, a bunch of keys at your side, and your hair combed smoothly over a roll.

LADY T. Yes. I remember very well; my daily occupations were to overlook the dairy, superintend the poultry, make extracts from the family receipt-book, and comb my aunt Deborah's lap-dog.

SIR P. Oh! I am glad to find you have so good a recollection.

LADY T. My evening employments were to draw patterns for ruffles, which I had not materials to make up; play at Pope Joan with the curate; read a sermon to my aunt Deborah, or perhaps be stuck up at an old spinet, and thrum my father to sleep after a fox-chase.

SIR P. Then you were glad to take a ride out behind the butler upon the old docked coach-horse.

LADY T. No, no; I deny the butler and the coach-horse.

SIR P. I say you did. This *was* your situation. Now, madam, you must have your coach, *vis-à-vis*, and three powdered footmen to walk before your chair; and in summer, two white cats, to draw you to Kensington Gardens; and instead of your living in that hole in the country, I have brought you here, made a woman of fortune of you, a woman of quality—in short, I have made you my wife.

LADY T. Well! and there is but one thing more you can now add to the obligation, and that is—

SIR P. To make you my widow, I suppose.

LADY T. Hem!—

SIR P. Very well, madam; very well; I am much obliged to you for the hint.

LADY T. Why, then, will you force me to say shocking things to you? But now we have finished our morning conversation, I want you to be in a monstrous good humour; come, do be good-humoured, and let me have two hundred pounds.

SIR P. What! can't I be in good humour without paying for it?—but look always thus, and you shall want for nothing. [*Pulls out a pocket-book.*] There, there are two hundred pounds for you. [*Going to kiss her.*] Now seal my bond for payment.

LADY T. No; my note of hand will do as well.

[*Giving her hand.*]

SIR P. Well, well; I must be satisfied with that. You shan't much longer reproach me for not having made a proper settlement. I intend shortly to surprise you.

LADY T. Do you? You can't think, Sir Peter, how good humour becomes you. Now you look just as you did before I married you.

SIR P. Do I, indeed?

LADY T. Don't you remember when you used to walk with me under the elms, and tell me stories of what a gallant you were in your youth, and asked me if I could like an old fellow, who would deny me nothing?

SIR P. Ay! and you were so attentive and obliging to me then!

LADY T. To be sure I was, and used to take your part against all my acquaintance; and when my cousin Sophy used to laugh at me for thinking of marrying a man old enough to be my father, and call you an ugly, stiff, formal old bachelor, I contradicted her, and said I did not think you so ugly by any means, and that I dared say you would make a good sort of a husband.

SIR P. That was very kind of you. Well, and you were not mistaken; you have found it so, have you not? But shall we always live thus happy?

LADY T. With all my heart. I don't care how soon we leave off quarrelling—provided you will own you are tired first.

SIR P. With all my heart.

LADY T. Then we shall be as happy as the day is long, and never, never—never quarrel more.

SIR P. Never—never—never—never! And let our future contest be who shall be most obliging.

LADY T. Ay!

SIR P. But, my dear Lady Teazle!—my love!—indeed, you must keep a strict watch over your temper; for you know, my dear, that in all our disputes and quarrels, you always begin first.

LADY T. No, no, Sir Peter, my dear; 'tis you always that begin.

SIR P. No, no—no such thing.

LADY T. Have a care; this is not the way to live happy if you fly out thus.

SIR P. Madam, I say 'tis you.

LADY T. I never saw such a man in my life—just what my cousin Sophy told me.

SIR P. Your cousin Sophy is a forward, saucy, impertinent minx.

LADY T. You are a very great bear, I am sure, to abuse my relations.

SIR P. But I am very well served for marrying you—a pert, forward, rural coquette; who had refused half the honest squires in the country.

LADY T. I am sure I was a great fool for marrying you—a stiff, cross, dangling old bachelor, who was unmarried at fifty because nobody would have him.

SIR P. You were very glad to have me. You never had such an offer.

LADY T. Oh, yes, I had. There was Sir Tivey Ferrier, who everybody said would be a better match; for his estate was full as good as yours, and—he has broke his neck since we were married.

SIR P. Very well—very well, madam! You're an ungrateful woman; and may plagues light on me if I ever try to be friends with you again. You shall have a separate maintenance!

LADY T. By all means, a separate maintenance.

SIR P. Very well, madam! Oh, very well! Ay, madam, and I'll have a divorce, madam. I'll make an example of myself for the benefit of all old bachelors.

LADY T. Well, Sir Peter, I see you are going to be in a passion, so I'll leave you; and when you are come properly to your temper, we shall be the happiest couple in the world, and never—never—quarrel more. Ha, ha, ha! *[Exit.]*

SIR P. So! I have got much by my intended expostulation! What a charming air she has! And how pleasantly she shows her contempt of my authority! Well, though I can't make her love me, 'tis some pleasure to tease her a little; and I think she never appears to such advantage as when she is going everything to vex and plague me.

R. B. SHERIDAN.

THE ROSE QUEEN.

THE fairest rose of a rich rose-bed
Its fragrance over the others shed;
No flower could rival its form or scent;
The proud white lily was e'en content
To bow its beauty before this rose,
Red like the sun when it seeks repose;
And bees and butterflies wooed its heart;
But still it stood, like a queen, apart.

A nightingale from the tree above
Would watch this rose with its eyes of love,
And, poet-like, through the whole night long,
Would pour its heart in a flood of song.
But, proud, the rose would make no reply
To bee, or song-bird, or butterfly;
While all the flowers around it yearned
For even half of the love it spurned.

A skylark came to this garden fair,
And, singing, sailed o'er the roses there;
The whole air rang with its rapturous notes,
Echoed by hundreds of feathered throats.
Heedless it swooped to the flowered ground,
Then up once more with a winged bound;
And, as it soared to the far-off blue,
The rose-queen's heart went heavenwards too.

The rose was plucked for a maid's love-token;
Now flung away,—and the maid's heart broken.
The nightingale that would love the rose
Sang out its life e'er the summer's close;
The lark, so glad of its own free life,
Was shot, and fell to the gourmand's knife.
So all things pass; yet the world is fair.
Is death worth sorrow? Is life worth care?

MALCOLM C. SALAMAN.

By permission of the Author.

TO A MUSTARD PLASTER.

THOU precious balm for mortal aches and pains,
Thy praise in storied verse I here recite:
The smartest friend of all the bosom friends
That ever muster'd 'neath my failing sight.
When other friends their prompt departure take,
Thou'st stickest to me with the greater zeal;
And while asserting thy prerogative,
Thy strength of character dost make me feel.
In gratitude to thee I fairly weep—
Or is it thine attractiveness, forsooth,
That draws the tears from out my manly eyes,
As hot as were the passions of my youth?
Thy friendship is not cold or worldly-wise;
Nay! 'tis the very soul of hot desire;
And when thou slumb'rest on my aching part,
Methinks 'tis lick'd by thousand tongues of fire.

Thou rare companion of my wakeful hours,

The while I count the moments creeping by,
And feel the blisters rising one by one—

I cannot hope for sleep while thou art nigh.

One only failing thine (and that is strange):

Thou dost not know when thou hast heal'd the
smart,

But waitest to be rudely torn away,

Albeit 'tis said, "The best of friends must
part!"

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

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"WARRANTED SOUND, AND QUIET TO RIDE AND DRIVE."

OLD Mr. Tipoter lately determined to purchase a horse, although his wife was somewhat averse to the contract. "For," she said, "I feel sure you cannot drive, Tipoter. You may be a very good tailor; but I don't believe you can manage a horse, never having had the least experience." However, her husband had made up his mind to purchase one. But "he should not go beyond five pounds," he said; and the animals which were shown him at this price, as easily imagined, were indeed a poor sample. Nevertheless, Mr. Tipoter presently selected one, named "Wonder," which, the dealer said, was "Warranted sound, and quiet to ride and drive." The horse was bought and paid for, and bedded up for the night in Mr. Tipoter's one-horse stable. Soon after retiring to bed, the purchaser and his wife were awakened by a very peculiar sound from the said stable, apparently caused by his "framework" there abiding. Mr. Tipoter told his wife not to be frightened; but, as he procured a light, his nerves were greatly upset, and "he did like a jelly shiver" when approaching "the abode of the 'Wonder.'" Mr. Tipoter was not often nervous, but the sight at the stable was most extraordinary. "Wonder" was lying in the manger, his forelegs twisted dexterously over his neck. The head was somewhat raised, and each time the animal breathed, he clapped his hoofs together under his throat, and "chanked" his long teeth, all the while keeping up a moan, which sounded something like "O-o-o-ts, O-o-o-ts, O-o-o-ts." Poor old Mr. Tipoter quickly left the place, and loudly shouted to his wife, "Come quickly, Sarah! 'Wonder' has been walking in his sleep, and fallen into the manger." The wife was downstairs in about two minutes, and, hand in hand, graciously guided by the light of the lantern, Mr. Tipoter and his wife cautiously approached the building. But "Wonder" was *non est*. A little meadow adjoining the stable was searched, but half an hour had elapsed ere the animal was found. He was quietly finish-

ing up a bushel of "best households," which had been placed in readiness for baking, having also eaten a large quantity of dry rice. By dint of great ingenuity, the owner and his partner at last succeeded in getting the artful quadruped towards his own quarters. But now a fresh difficulty arose. The rice had made "Wonder" very "fat sided," and he could not now get through the stable-door, so had to be left in the passage-way. But the owner was still determined to try him on the road, and Mrs. Tipoter could not even now dissuade her husband from the idea. As a consequence, the next morning, "Wonder" having splendidly subsided, he was attached to a borrowed cart, and Mr. Tipoter set off for a drive, being accompanied by his wife. Said she, "If I don't go, too, something will be sure to happen." She went, nevertheless something did happen—a good deal in fact.

During three miles the journey was almost tolerable, the accidents only including two falls, jibbing at every public-house, and flinging a shoe. But at the fourth milestone the horse came to a dead stop, and would not move even his tail—or rather stump, for he had "shot his tail" during his nocturnal pranks. But "'Wonder' would not a-trotting go," and poor Mr. Tipoter did not know which way to turn for help. His wife positively refused to hold the reins whilst "Wonder's" head was patted, so there was nothing to do but wait the issue of events. For a whole hour the trio remained stationary. Then the animal began to shake his head, and the driver prepared to start, when, instead of journeying on, "Wonder" again commenced the unearthly groans of "O-o-o-ts, O-o-o-ts, O-o-o-ts," then threw up his forefeet, and—laid down! Mr. Tipoter had him raised by means of a jack, and at length the bony quadruped evinced some willingness to proceed; and, "given his head," he took two steps—backward. Then "Wonder" put his head to the ground, and emitted a quantity of blood, at which the owner was very frightened, and the wife nearly fainted; but no reason could be found for the blood coming from the remarkable animal's mouth. He was given water, and at length again urged homeward. But he emitted blood again, and it was then discovered that "Wonder" had a convenient notion of sucking his teeth. Another horse was attached in front of him, and a little part of the journey was accomplished, but immediately the "leader" was taken away, "Wonder" again dropped down in the road, with the dismal moan, "O-o-o-ts, O-o-o-ts, O-o-o-ts." However, his weary owner at last got him home, and commenced detaching him from the cart, principally by the aid of a knife. Presently there was but one small rope to cut. This has done, and "Wonder"—fell down dead! "Just as he fell," Mr. Tipoter told a sympathising friend, "my wife was stooping to pick up a buckle which belonged to

the harness, and 'Wonder' toppled right over her, caught her dress on one of his ribs which had pricked through the skin, and her gown came off her back as cleanly as though a tailor had 'cut her out,' and I had to make her a present of £3 ros. for *that* alone. This is all private, mind, but I'll never buy a horse again as long as I live." And he never did, because he also died the same night, the 'cause of death being the sudden and acute worry occasioned by "Wonder." Of course, you need not believe a word of this unless you like.

J. M. BURTON.

By permission of the Author.

THE KING AND THE ASTROLOGER.

'Twas in a land, no matter where,
And distant far the time,
A monarch reigned of whom I wish
To speak to you in rhyme.

His locks were white, his nose was red,
His temper rather short;
In youth he'd loved his exercise,
In age he loved his port.

The period was rather dark,
Such ignorance prevailed;
The wise and true too often starved,
Where charlatans reigned.

But still this King was fair and just
According to his light,
And those who fought for him by day
Might feast with him by night.

Promotion came to most who showed
Capacity, 'twas said,
While those who ill performed their rôle
Ran quickly short of bread.

The fashion had gone out for fools,
And dwarfs, and giants, too;
So these old Court monstrosities
Had got no work to do.

Astrology was all the rage,
And alchemy a thing
That found its readiest patrons in
A needy prince or king.

Now, King Come-over-em was not
A man to be behind
Times, and so he very soon
To alchemy inclined.

At after working for a while
With the great Doo-da-dô,
Finding gold was slow to come,
He to the Doo to go.

"Go, forthwith, go! my clever friend,"
Said he, "quick, disappear;
You've failed—enough for such as you;
Life's but uncertain here."

Upon that hint the Great Doo-da
Packed up his vampire bat,
His crocodile, his crucibles,
His furnace, and his cat.

And very soon was off—ill luck
Sometimes attends such cheats;
And Doo-da's days were ended as
A juggler's on the streets.

Come-over-em invited now
A man who read the stars,
And was upon the closest terms
With Venus and with Mars,

And other planetary worlds
That in our system swim;
Spoke of the Zodiac as though
Those signs belonged to him.

He'd books of fate and mystic charts
And magic circles three,
And wore a dark and dingy skirt
Which went below the knee;

And hieroglyphics round that skirt,
Which no one could explain,
Ran riot till they'd compassed it,
And then ran back again.

His lamp was an old nigger's skull,
And he was very fond
Of flourishing a stick he termed
His talismanic wand.

Magnus Germanicus could cast
Nativities, and tell
The fortune of your future days,
If you but paid him well.

And for our King he prophesied
Such wealth and length of days;
The Monarch felt in duty bound
His wage at once to raise.

When some prognostics falling due
By chance turned out all right,
His Majesty went well-nigh mad
With liquor and delight.

The Court Astrologer forthwith
Increased in pelf and power,
And worldly honours fell on him
In one continual shower.

Good fortune sometimes proves a snare,
And Magnus G. let fly
His genius now uncurbed, and went
At wholesale prophecy.

Until the King ne'er thought to make
A motion or a move,
Unless the Court Astrologer
His action did approve.

One day, Come-over-em declared
He would a hunting go,
If but assured that there would be
No fall of rain or snow.

"My liege," said Magnus G., "there'll be
No sign of rain or snow,
Till you have ridden to your sport,
And safe returned, I trow."

Away, away, without delay,
The merry courtiers fly,
Free from all fear, to chase the deer
A jolly company!

A peasant with a panniered ass,
Encountered in a lane,
Advancing cries, "O king, go back!
Go back! it's going to rain."

The monarch gives a loud "Ha! ha!"
Then answers, "Knave, thou'rt wrong;
The sun doth shine, it will be fine."
And then careers along.

But soon the sky grows overcast,
And in a half an hour,
Come-over-em is overta'en
By a tremendous shower.

With rage and disappointment mad,
He for the castle flies,
Upsets his warder, kicks his page,
And blacks his gold-stick's eyes.

Soon for the Court Astrologer
A messenger hath sped:
Or rather for a part of him,
And that part is—his head.

"Find out the peasant," cries the King,
"Who prophesied the wet;
With him for Court Astrologer
We may be happy yet."

They find the man and bring him in,
All trembling with dismay.
"I couldn't help the rain," cries he,
"You'll pardon, sire, I pray!"

"Pardon! tut, tut!" replies the King,
"Your prophecy proved true.
We've slain our old astrologer,
And give his place to you."

"Nay, sire," the man returns, "to me
That post can never pass:
I only knew 'twas going to rain,
Because my faithful ass—"

"Whenever we're to get a fall
Of snow, or rain, or hail,
Down flops his ears, and gives a twitch
Peculiar with his tail."

"Enough! enough!" exclaims the King,
"Your donkey is no dunce;
We give to him the vacant place,
So send him here at once!"

Forthwith the jackass was installed,
And prospering at his post,
He told his friends of his success
Who came to court a host.

And since that day, mark what I say—
The truth I don't distort—
Donkeys have found the best of berths
About a King and Court.

J. G. WATTS.

By permission of the Author.

JUDY OF ROUNDWOOD.*

THERE is a little straggling village in Wicklow, named Roundwood, which is a sort of outpost to the many beauties of that romantic and lovely county, and consequently often made a stopping-place by those rambles who can steal a day or two from toil and care, and have the dust of Dublin blown from about them by the mountain breezes of the alpine county I have named. I, for one, confess the enormity of having eaten eggs and bacon in the little inn of Roundwood, served to me by the hand of Judy. Her surname has never reached me, for, as the Italians called many of their celebrated painters after the towns or cities that gave them birth, so Judy had been named—"Judy of Roundwood."

Her principal peculiarity was stinting every word she could of its fair proportion—whether from any spite she had against the alphabet, or from wishing to clear her sex from the charge of overwordiness, I know not; but Judy talked short-hand, if an Irishman may be allowed the phrase. Her merits in this particular cannot be appreciated in modern times, but Judy would have been a darling among the Spartans.

At the door of the inn, which owed much of its custom to this original, Judy would salute the weary traveller with a low curtsy, crossing her hands before her upon her low checkered apron, and say, "Consola to the gent"—meaning thereby consolation to the gentleman—Judy considering refreshment the greatest *consola* to the gentleman. Whisky she called by the name of "Wo."

* This sketch was originally written by one who gave it, with an admirable pen, his very clever entertainment of "J. L."

B. J. M.
"Wo."
life was
Enlarged to

of "Temptation"—abbreviated, of course, to "*Tempta*." Dublin was either familiarly "*Dub*," or dubbed with the more high-sounding title of "*Metrop*"; and being also given to rhyming, whenever a tag was to be found, she jumped at it.

When first I visited Judy in company with a friend, who was equally anxious with myself to draw her out, we affected not to comprehend the meaning of all her abbreviations, with a view to force her upon an explanation, and she said: "You see, sir, *Ju* deals in *abbrevia*—because that is the *perfect* of the *English lang*. *Din* for dinner; *brek* for breakfast; *rel* for relish. *Ju's conversa* is *allegor*; I calls the dinner *satisfac*, and the drop o' comfort the *tempta*; and this little *apart* where we give *consola* to the *gents*, I call the bower of *hap*."

After having had some rustic refreshment we ordered whiskey, and when Judy brought it in to us her look and manner were highly amusing. With a stealthy step and an air of mock mystery she stole across the room towards us, and withdrawing her apron with one hand from over the measure of spirits she held in the other, she said: "*Ju* was only throwing an *obscu* over the *opportu*." We then drew her attention to some verses that were written on the walls of the apartment in her praise. "That's the rayson I call it the bower of *hap*," said she; "but sure I'm not such an *ignora* as to believe all the *flat* of the *cits*. Good-bye, dear; yiz are gay gents agoin' round the world for sport. May you never be wretched; may you share in the wisdom of *Sol*; may you never have to climb the rocks of *diff*, or be cast on the quicksands of *adver*, or stray from the paths of *vir*."

But perhaps the best thing I can do to put Judy more completely *en evidence*, is to give a conversation in her own style. That will serve, as Judy herself would say, as the best *exemplifica*.

"*Consola* to the gents; happy to see you, dear! Walk in—you can sit in the bower of *hap*. If you want your *brek*, it's a good one you may *expec*; if you want your *din*, this is the place to walk in; and *Ju* will give you the *opportu*, the *consola*, and the *materia*, and the *tempta*; and if you only want a *rel*, ring the bell. That's what I said the other day to O'Toole. The ignorant people calls him Mr. O'Toole; but he's not *Mister* O'Toole, but O'Toole, bein' descended from King O'Toole, of these parts. 'Good-morrow, Judy,' says he. 'Thank you kindly, sir,' says I. 'Here's a gent that is come to see you,' says he, for there was an artless sprisan along wid him. 'Kindly walk in, sir,' says I. 'You'll do all you can for us?' says he. 'Sir,' says I, '*fidel* is my *mot*—*Ju's* *mot*. The furriners calls it *Judy's mot*—that's French, sir. But as I said, *fidel* is my *mot*."

Submissive to my supayriors,
Condescending to my infayriors,
Faithful to my friends,
Charitable to my inimies.

"You had a *great* party here the other day, as

I'm towld,' says he. 'Yis, sir,' says I. 'Who wor they?' says he. 'Indeed,' says I, 'they did not indulge me with much *communica*; so I could not come to a *conclu*; but though I could not be *pos*, I had my *suspish*.' 'And who wor they?' says he. 'They were no less than Sir *Wal* and Miss *Edge*.' 'Who are they?' says O'Toole's friend, for he was mighty artless. 'Well, then, don't you know Sir *Wal*,' says I, 'and Miss *Edge*?' 'I hope you admire my *abbrevia*?' says I. 'Certainly,' says O'Toole, who was pleased with me about my *obscu*, for the *bothera* of the innocent gent, and he could hardly help laughin' at him, and to hide his laughin' he took a pinch o' snuff; and he, bein' a rale *gentleman*, av coorse liked the *blackguard*; and so takin' out his box, he said, like a rale gentleman, 'Judy,' says he, 'will you have a pinch?' 'Thank you, sir,' says I, 'for the *condescend*,' and with that his friend, not likin' to be worse nor another, said, 'Maybe you'll take a pinch from me,' says he, handin' me a box of the dirty soft wet thrash them furriners takes. Sure there's no good in anything or anybody that isn't always *dhry*, as I says to the *gents* from *Dub*, when I keeps continually bringin' them the whisky and the hot wather. Well, to come back to my story, the two handed me their boxes; and so O'Toole said, says he, 'Which will you have, Judy?—take whatever you please. Which do you like, the common snuff or the scented snuff?' 'Sir,' says I, makin' a low curtshee for the *civil*, 'I give the *com* the *pref*. But I was forgettin' about Sir *Wal* and Miss *Edge*. Sure they kem here to take the *opportu* to see you, to increase their *admir* for the beauties of *na*—in the county *Wick* in *partio*—and so when they arrived in

A post-shay
From 'Quin Bray.'

I was ready to give *consola* to the gents; and they asked for *brek*. 'What do you *expec*?' says I.

'Coffee,' says he.
'Cushlamachree,'

says I, 'there's no sich thing here, at all at all. There is neither coffee, tay, nor chocularitee tay; but there is the best of Bohay,' says I. 'Have you no green?' says he. 'Plenty in the fields,' says I. 'But nowhere else?' 'But I'll make up for the *defish*,' 'How?' says he. 'I'll give you a *rel*,' says I. 'What's that?' says he. 'A *rash*,' says I. 'I don't know what you mane,' says he. So I was obleeged to explain. 'A relish or a rasher,' says I; for the *artif* of my *abbrevia* was beyond his *conjee*. 'Bring it in at wanst,' says he. So no sooner said than done—but you see I was obleeged to bring in the rasher on a cracked plate—and very well I had it—for Roundwood was mighty throng that mornin'—loads of gents—barrowfuls o' gents from *Dub* to see *Ju*—coming

into the county *Wick* with a short *stick* to enjoy the *admira* of the beauties of *na*. Well, as I said, I brought in the *rash* on a cracked plate, and Sir *Wal* was *indig*; and, says he, 'How dar you bring the like to a dacent man?' And what do you think I said? Says I, 'the *necess* is my *apol*.' I thought he'd split himself wid the laughin! So with that he wint to readin' the po'thry on the walls; and at last he kem to one that a young *vag*—from the *Col*—the *Univer*—*Trin. Coll. Dub.*—wrote on me, and I put my hand over it. 'Don't read that, sir,' says I, for I putended net to know who he was, though I knew very well all the time; 'don't read that,' says I. 'Why?' says he. 'Because,' says I, 'twas written by a *vulga*, and 'twould shock your *sinsibil*, if anything came under *contempla* bordering on the *indel*.' 'Then,' says Miss *Edge*, 'that's very proper of you, Ju,' says she. 'Yis, madam,' says I. 'I was always a *Dia*; for I have had a good *educa*.' 'How could you have a good education?' says Sir *Wal*. 'Bekase the gentlemen o' larnin' comes to see Ju; and where would I larn *educa*,' says I, 'if not from them?' 'Why, what gentlemen o' larnin' comes here?' says Sir *Wal*. '*More than owns to it*,' says I, lookin' mighty dignified at him. 'Indeed!' says he. 'Yis,' says I. 'And one o' the gentlemen was no *gentleman*, he was only a *vag*, for he put me in a *mag*; but in general they are the rale quality, and I know a power o' them.' 'Name one,' says he. 'T. M.' says I. 'Who's T. M.?' says he. 'You're mighty ignorant,' says I to Sir *Wal*. 'Wasn't that a good thing to say to him? I thought Miss *Edge* and he would die with the laughin'.' 'Well, but who is T. M.?' says he. 'Tom Moore,' says I, 'the glory of Ireland,' says I, crassin' myself. 'Oh, Moore the poet!' says Sir *Wal*. 'By dad, he's no poet at all,' says I, 'but a rale gentleman, for he gev me half-a-crown.' Well, I thought they both o' them would die with the laughin'; and so when they wor goin', says I to the lady, 'Good mornin', and many thanks to you, ma'am,' says I 'for your *condescen*—long may you reign,' says I to Miss *Edge*. Well, she looked mightily surprised at me, for you see I had a *conjee* who they wor from the sarvants, by a way o' my own. 'You've taken the worth out of my name, Judy,' says she, mighty goodnatured. 'Throtho, then, that's more nor I could do, ma'am,' says I, 'for there's more worth in the half o' your name than in the whole o' mine, though I am Judy o' Roundwood.' Well, with that Sir *Wal* laughed out, and says he, 'How did you find the lady out?' says he. 'Only by *supposish*,' says I, for I wouldn't be guilty of *infidel* to the sarvants who let on to me. 'Then I suppose you found out who I am, too?' says Sir *Wal*. 'No, indeed, sir,' says I, 'how could I know the Great *Un*? Oh, I wish you could ha' seen the look he gve when I said that!'

SAMUEL LOVER.

KITTY OF COLERAINE.

As beautiful *Kitty* one morning was tripping
With a pitcher of milk from the fair of Colera-
raine,
When she saw me she stumbled, the pitcher it
tumbled,
And all the sweet butter-milk watered the plain.
"Oh, what shall I do now? 'twas looking at you
now;
Sure, sure, such a pitcher I'll ne'er meet again;
'Twas the pride o' my dairy—O, Barney McCleary,
You're sent as a plague to the girls of Coleraine."

I sat down beside her, and gently did chide her,
That such a misfortune should give her such
pain;
A kiss then I gave her, and before I did leave
her,
She vowed for such pleasure she'd break it
again.
'Twas haymaking season, I can't tell the reason,
Misfortune will never come single, that's plain;
For, very soon after poor *Kitty's* disaster,
The devil a pitcher was whole in Coleraine.

HOW BABS MALONE WON THE
HANDICAP.

Now the squatters and the "cockies,"
Shearers, trainers, and their jockeys,
Had gathered them together for a meeting on the
flat;
They had mustered all their forces,
Owners brought their fastest horses,
Monaro-bred—I couldn't give them greater praise
than that.

* * * * *
Idly waiting for the starting
Of the race that he had part in,
Old Gaylad stood and champed his bit, his weight
about nine stone;
His owner stood beside him,
Who was also going to ride him,
A shearer from Gegederick, whose name was Ned
Malone.

But Gaylad felt disgusted,
For his joints were fairly rusted,
He longed to feel the pressure of the jockey on his
back,
And he felt that for a pin he'd
Join his mates, who loudly whinnied.
For him to go and meet them at the post, upon the
track.

From among the waiting cattle
Came the sound of childish prattle,
And the wife brought up their babe to kiss his
father for good luck;

Said Malone: "When I am seated
On old Gaylad, and am treated
With fairish play, I'll bet we never finish in the
ruck."

But the babe was not contented,
Though his pinafore was scented
With oranges, and sticky from his lollies, for he
cried,

This gallant little laddie,
As he toddled to his daddy,
And raised his arms imploringly, "Pease, dad, give
Babs a wide."

Then the father, how he chuckled
For the pride of it, and buckled
The surcingle, and placed the babe astride the
racing pad;

He did it, though he oughtn't,
And by Providence he shortened
The stirrups, and adjusted them to suit the tiny
lad,

Who was seemingly delighted,
Not a little bit affrighted,
He sat and twined a chubby hand among the
horse's mane,
His whip was in the other;
But all suddenly the mother
Shrieked, "Take him off!" and then "the field"
came thund'ring down the plain.

'Twas the Handicap was coming,
And the rhythm of their drumming
Beat dull upon the turf that in its summer coat
was dressed;

The racehorse reared and started,
Then the flimsy bridle parted,
And Gaylad, bearing featherweight, was striding
with the rest.

That scene cannot be painted,
How the poor young mother fainted,
How the father drove the spurs into the nearest
saddlehorse;

What to do? he had no notion,
For you'd easier turn the ocean
Than stop the Handicap that then was half-way
round the course.

On the "bookies" at their yelling,
On the cheap-jacks at their selling,
On the crowd there fell a silence as the squadron
passed the stand;

Gayest colours flashing brightly,
And the baby clinging tightly,
A wisp of Gaylad's mane still twisted in his little
hand.

Not a thought had he of falling,
Though his little legs were galling,
And the wind blew out his curls behind him in a
golden stream;

Though the motion made him dizzy,
Yet his baby-brain was busy,
For hadn't he at length obtained the substance of
his dream?

He was now a jockey really,
And he law his duty clearly,
To do his best to win and justify his father's
pride;

So he clicked his tongue to Gaylad,
Whisp'ring softly. "Get away, lad!"
The old horse cocked an ear, and put six inches on
his stride.

Then the jockeys who were tailing,
Saw a big bay horse come sailing
Through the midst of them with nothing but a
baby on his back,
And this startling apparition
Coolly took up its position,
With the view of making running on the inside of
the track.

Oh, Gaylad was a beauty,
For he knew, and did his duty;
Though his reins were flying loosely, strange to say
he never fell,
But held himself together,
For his weight was but a feather;
Bob Murphy, when he saw him, murmured some-
thing like "O hell!"

But Gaylad passed the filly,
Passed Jack Costigan on Chili,
Cut down the coward Wakatip, and challenged
Guelder Rose;
Here it was he showed his cunning,
Let the mare make all the running,
They turned into the straight at stride for stride
and nose for nose.

But Babs was just beginning
To have fears about his winning,
In fact, to tell the truth, my hero felt inclined to
cry,

For the Rose was still in blossom,
And two lengths behind her Possum,
And gallant little Sterling, slow but sure, were
drawing nigh.

Yes, Babsie's heart was failing,
For he felt old Gaylad ailing;
Another fifty yards to go, he felt his chance was
gone.

Could he do it? much he doubted,
Then the crowd, oh, how they shouted,
For Babs had never dropped his whip, and now he
laid it on.

Down the straight the leaders thundered,
While the people cheered and wondered,
For ne'er before had any seen the equal of that sight:

And never will they, maybe,
See a flaxen-headed baby
Flog racehorse to the winning-post with all his tiny might.

But Gaylad's strength was waning,
Gone, in fact, beyond regaining,
Poor Babs was flogging hopelessly, as pale as any ghost;

But he looked so brave and pretty
That the Rose's jock took pity,
And pulling back a trifle, let the baby pass the post.

What cheering and tinkettling
Had they after at the "settling,"
And how they fought to see who'd hold the baby on his lap;

As President Montgomery,
With a brimming glass of "Pomm'ry,"
Proposed the health of Babs Malone, who'd won the Handicap.

BARCROFT H. BOAKE.

From the "Sydney Bulletin."

BABY MAY.

CHEEKS as soft as July peaches,
Lips whose dewy scarlet teaches
Poppies paleness—round large eyes
Ever great with new surprise,
Minutes filled with shadeless gladness,
Minutes just as brimmed with sadness,
Happy smiles and wailing cries,
Crows and laughs and tearful eyes,
Lights and shadows swifter born
Than on wind-swept Autumn corn,
Ever some new tiny notion
Making every limb all motion—
Catchings up of legs and arms,
Throwings back and small alarms,
Clutching fingers—straightening jerks,
Twining feet whose each toe works,
Kickings up and straining risings,
Mother's ever new surprisings,
Hands all wants and looks all wonder
At all things the heavens under,
Tiny scorns of smiled reproving
That have more of love than lovings,
Mischiefs done with such a winning
Archness, that we prize such sinning,
Breakings dirp of plates and glasses,
Graspings small at all that passes,
Pullings off of all that's able
To be caught from tray or table;

Silences—small meditations
Deep as thoughts of cares for nations,
Breaking into wisest speeches
In a tongue that nothing teaches,
All the thoughts of whose possessing
Must be wooed to light by guessing,
Slumbers—such sweet angel-seemings,
That we'd ever have such dreamings,
Till from sleep we see thee breaking,
And we'd always have thee waking;
Wealth for which we know no measure,
Pleasure high above all pleasure,
Gladness brimming over gladness,
Joy in care—delight in sadness,
Loveliness beyond completeness,
Sweetness distancing all sweetness,
Beauty all that beauty may be,
That's May Bennett—that's my baby.

W. C. BLNKETT.

By permission of the Author.

COALS ON THE CHEAP.

DENNIS REAGEN is now living in a set of model dwellings overlooking the railway. Across the street lives an Italian nobleman in reduced circumstances who ekes out his poor existence with the aid of a monkey and a piano-organ. To Garibaldi came Dennis one evening, and, after passing the time of day, warmed up to the subject in hand.

"Av ye plaze, Misther Garrybaldy," said Dennis in his most unctuous and wheedling tone, "wud ye have any objections to lendin' me yer munkey fer an hour or two ivry mornin'?"

"What-a for you want-a munk?" inquired the Count.

"Niver ye mind," replied Dennis. "What wud ye charge a mornin' for the use av him?"

The Count suggested that twopence an hour would be the proper figure, after vainly attempting to find out what Dennis was going to do with the monkey. To these terms Dennis agreed.

Everything went on well for a few days. The money was paid promptly, and the monkey was returned regularly in time not to interfere with the requirements of the Count's profession. To be sure the animal looked a little hollow-eyed and careworn, but in the main he was in good condition.

Finally, however, the Italian's curiosity got the better of his avarice, and he told Dennis that the monkey would not be lent out any more. This announcement had a most depressing effect on Dennis. Yet his mastodon intellect rose to the emergency.

"Garrybaldy," said he, "av ye'll promise to act square and not give the racket away I'll be after

takin' 'ye into partnership an' gin 'ye half the profits for the use of the munkey."

"All-a-right-a," said the Italian.

At this the new partners shook hands, and each took another pull out of the can of beer which Dennis had provided to lubricate the negotiations. Then Dennis in his customary lordly manner put his arm through the Italian's, and together they sauntered over to the back-yard of the house where Dennis lived.

"D'ye see thet ther pole, Garry?" inquired Dennis, pointing to a pole some fifteen feet high, surmounted by a cross piece.

The Italian couldn't very well help seeing it, and remarked that it was within the range of his vision.

"D'ye know, phwat ther is beyant the fence?" said Dennis. "Thim's the railway lines. Now thin, Garry, this is the idea: Early in the mornin' whin the coal-trains begins to come in, I put the monkey on the pole. The brakesmin is all out on the trucks riddy to go up the thristles, an' ivery mother's son of thim flings two or three pieces of coal at the munkey. I've laid tin tons away in the cellar, and divil a wan o'thim's hit the munkey yet."

And that was how Dennis got his coals on the cheap.

HE AND SHE.

"SHE is dead!" they said to him. "Come away; Kiss her! and leave her!—thy love is clay!"

They smooched her tresses of dark-brown hair; On her forehead of marble they laid it fair:

Over her eyes, which gazed too much,
They drew the lids with a gentle touch;

With a tender touch they closed up well
The sweet thin lips that had secrets to tell;

About her brows, and her dear pale face
They tied her veil and her marriage-lace;

And drew on her white feet her white silk shoes—
Which were the whiter no eye could choose!

And over her bosom they crossed her hands,
"Come away," they said—"God understands!"

And then there was silence—and nothing there
But the Silence—and scents of the eglantere,

And jasmine, and roses, and rosemary;
For they said, "As a lady should lie, lies she!"

And they held their breath as they left the room,
With a shudder to glance at its stillness and gloom.

But he—who loved her too well to dread
The sweet, the stately, the beautiful Dead—

He lit his lamp, and took the key,
And turned it!—Alone again—he and she!

He and she; but she would not speak,
Though he kissed, in the old place, the quiet cheek;

He and she; yet she would not smile,
Though he called her the name that was fondest erewhile;

He and she; and she did not move
To any one passionate whisper of love!

Then he said, "Cold lips! and breast without breath;

Is there no voice—no language of death,

"Dumb to the ear, and still to the sense,
But to heart and to soul distinct—intense?"

"See now—I listen with soul, not ear—
What was the secret of dying, Dear?"

"Was it the infinite wonder of all,
That you ever could let life's flower fall?"

"Or was it a greater marvel to feel
The perfect calm o'er the agony steal?"

"Was the miracle greater to find how deep,
Beyond all dreams, sank downward that sleep?"

"Did life roll backward its record, Dear,
And show, as they say it does, past things clear?"

"And was it the innermost heart of the bliss
To find out, so, what a wisdom love is?"

"Oh, perfect Dead! Oh, Dead most dear,
I hold the breath of my soul to hear;

"I listen—as deep as to horrible hell,
As high as to heaven! and you do not tell!

"There must be pleasure in dying, Sweet,
To make you so placid from head to feet!

"I would tell *you*, Darling, if I were dead,
And 'twere *your* hot tears upon my brow shed.

"I would say, though the Angel of Death had laid
His sword on my lips to keep it unsaid.

"You should not ask vainly, with streaming eyes,
Which in Death's touch was the chiefest surprise;

"The very strangest and suddenest thing
Of all the surprises that dying must bring."

Ah! foolish world! Oh! most kind Dead!
Though he told me, who will believe it was said?

Who will believe that he heard her say,
With the soft rich voice, in the sweet old way:—

"The utmost wonder is this,—I hear,
And see you, and love you, and kiss you, Dear;

"I can speak, now you listen with soul alone;
If your soul could see, it would all be shown

"What a strange delicious amazement is Death,
To be without body and breathe without breath.

"I should laugh for joy if you did not cry;
Oh, listen! Love lasts!—Love never will die.

"I am only your Angel who was your Bride;
And I know that, though dead, I have never died."

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

By permission of the Author.

AT THE OPERA.

At Paris it was, at the Opera there;—

And she looked like a Queen of old time that
night,

With the wreathed pearls in her raven hair,
And her breast with the diamond bright.

The moon on the tower slept soft as snow:

And who was not thrill'd in the strangest way,
As the Troubadour sung while the gas burn'd low,
"Non ti scordar di me?"

Side by side in our box we sat

Together, my bride-betroth'd and I:
My gaze was fix'd on my opera-hat,
And hers on the stage hard by:

And both were silent, and both were sad.

Queenly she lean'd on her full white arm,
With that regal, indolent air she had;
So confident of her charm!

I have not a doubt she was thinking then
Of her former lord, good soul that he was!
Who died the richest and roundest of men,
The Marquis of Carabas.

That narrow gate to the kingdom of Heaven,
He was not too portly, I trust, to pass.
I wish him well, for the jointure given
To my lady of Carabas.

Meanwhile, I was thinking of my first love
As I had not been thinking of aught for years,
Till over my eyes there began to move
Something that felt like tears.

I thought of the dress that she wore last time,
When we stood 'neath the cypress trees together,
In that lost land, in her own soft clime,
In the crimson evening weather,

By the broken wall, on the brown grass-plot:
And her white warm neck in its golden chain;
And her full, soft hair wound into a knot,
And falling loose again:

And the jasmin-flower in her fair young breast:
(O the faint, sweet smell of that jasmin-flower!)
And the last bird singing alone to his nest:
And the first star over the tower.

I thought of our little quarrels and strife;
And the letter that brought me back my ring,
And it all seem'd then, in the waste of life,
Such a very little thing!

For I thought of her grave below the hill,
Which the sentinel cypress-tree stands over,
And I thought—"Were she only living still,
How I could forgive her, and love her!"

And I swear, as I thought of her thus in that hour,
And of how, after all, old things were best,
That I smelt the smell of that jasmin-flower
Which she used to wear in her breast.

It smelt so faint, and it smelt so sweet,
It made me creep, and it made me cold!
Like the scent that steals from the crumbling sheet
Where a mummy is half unroll'd.

And I turn'd and look'd. She was sitting there
In a dim box over the stage; and drest
In the dress that I knew, with her full soft hair,
And that jasmin in her breast!

She was there: and I was here:
And the glittering horse-shoe curved between:—
And from here to there, and from tier to tier,
From my bride that was to have been,

To my early love, with her eyes downcast,
And over her blush-rose face the shade
(In short, from the Future back to the Past),
There was but one step to be made.

To my early love from my future bride
One moment I look'd. Then I stole to the door,
I traversed the passage, and down at her side
I was sitting, a moment more.

My thinking of her, or the music's strain,
Or something that never will be express'd,
Had brought her back from the grave again,
With the jasmin in her breast.

She is not dead, and she is not wed!
But she loves me now, and she loved me then!
And the very first word that her sweet lips said,
My heart grew youthful again.

The Marchioness there, of Carabas,
She is wealthy, and young, and handsome still,
And but for her—well, we'll let that pass,
She may marry whomever she will.

But I will marry my own first love,
With her blush-rose face: for old things are best;
And the flower in her bosom, I prize it above
The brooch in my lady's breast.

The world is fill'd with folly and sin,
And Love must cling where it can, I say :
For Beauty is easy enough to win ;
But one isn't loved every day.

And I think, in the lives of most women and men,
There's a moment when all would go smooth and
even,
If only the dead could find out when
To come back and be forgiven.

OWEN MEREDITH.

By permission of LADY LYTTON.

THE VENTILATING HAT.

I HAD got to the very bottom of the ladder. Never mind how I got there, or why I got there; that's my business, and it doesn't concern you in the least. But I was earning my living all the same, and earning it honestly. The fact is, I was a peripatetic advertisement at the time—a sandwich-man; there's nothing like calling a spade a spade. Eighteen pence a day is not much, it is possible to live on it—with economy. But below the lowest round of the social ladder, which I had reached, there is a land in which I had never as yet sojourned—that is, the casual ward of the British workhouse. I had read the experiences of the Amateur Casual, they made my flesh creep. It wasn't pride that made me work, it wasn't an honest spirit of independence. Not a bit of it. It was the casual ward I dreaded, and the peculiarly unattractive *menu* provided for the able-bodied pauper.

And now, here I was with eighteen pence, my day's earnings, between me and the casual ward. And within twenty-four hours that eighteen pence of mine would assuredly disappear, and unless I got work of some sort, to the casual ward I should have to go.

I and a gentleman in a position similar to my own were talking matters over.

"Things is very slack, governor," said he to me; "if we was a bit sickly-looking like, we might sell our trotter-cases and start the starving British workman as has just come out of 'orspital. But we're too well-fed, we are, worse luck. I think I shall go into the country and do a bit of hopping till business is brisker; what do you say, mate?"

But I didn't care for hopping. I hate the country, and I resolved at all hazards to stop in town.

"There is one game, you might try," said my acquaintance, with a benignant smile, "and that's Wilkins, the ventilating hatter. But you can't keep on with that long, you know; it's ruin to the constitution."

Anything was better, to my mind, than the casual ward, so I asked for Wilkins's address.

"Oh, you can't miss it," was the answer, "you just walk down Shoreditch, there's always a crowd outside Wilkins's shop, and all you've got to do is to ask bold-like for Wilkins; and when you sees him you just ups and says, 'I'd like to be in the way of earning a honest 'alf-crown, sir.' Then he'll put you in the way at wunst."

Then my friend nodded, and took his departure.

I started off for Shoreditch at the comfortable pace usually adopted by the Society *flaneur* and the gentlemen of the profession to which for the moment I belonged—I mean, of course, the sandwich-men.

I arrived at Shoreditch. I wasn't long in finding Wilkins's; there was a crowd in front of the window. In the window were hundreds of hats; every one of them had a ticket bearing the same legend, "Wilkins's Ventilating Hat," then followed the price. At first I didn't see any particular reason for the crowd, which was staring into Mr. Wilkins's window in astonishment mingled with delight; but I gradually elbowed my way to the front row, and then I perceived what was the nature of the exhibition that gave so much pleasure to the inhabitants of Shoreditch.

In the centre of the array of hats were two human heads, which were protruded through two artfully constructed holes in the polished mahogany which formed the flooring of the shop-front. Each head was covered by what appeared to be an ordinary tall hat. The head on the right had a large window ticket behind it, on which were the following words:—

"Wilkins's Ventilating Hat. Perfect comfort. No suffering from heat by want of ventilation. The wearer of this article enjoys life. The head is human, there is no deception. The only establishment in which Wilkins's Ventilating Hat may be obtained. 'It comes as a boon and a blessing to men, like the Pickwick, the Owl, and the Waverley pen.'"

There was a similar ticket behind the head on the left.

"The Ordinary Silk Hat. Observe how the unfortunate wearer suffers from the heat. Poor fellow! he evidently wishes himself dead. The common unventilated hat of commerce is a fiendish invention, worthy of the atrocities of the worst days of the Spanish Inquisition. The wearer of an unventilated hat is hurrying to an early grave. The head is human, there is no deception."

I noticed that the mahogany planking of the shop-front below the heads was perforated with innumerable small holes; then I observed that there was a very great difference in the appearance of the faces of those wearing the hats. The gentleman wearing Wilkins's ventilating hat looked the picture of contentment. He smiled, he seemed as if he had attained the summit of human bliss. He was

evidently very comfortable, indeed. The other head presented a striking contrast. Never till now had I the least idea that such dreadful effects were produced by the wearing of an unventilated hat. The face was as pale as death; a cold perspiration seemed to trickle from every pore. The mouth was set, as though in agony, and all through an unventilated hat.

I went away to a neighbouring cookshop to get a bit of dinner. When I came back to the hatter's window, there were two fresh human heads in it; there evidently was no deception, and the unventilated hat was again producing the same dreadful effects upon a totally different victim.

I was puzzled; there was a mystery somewhere! I determined to unravel it, and I boldly entered the shop.

"What can I show you, sir?" said an assistant, with excessive urbanity.

"Well, I want to see Mr. Wilkins," I replied.

"That is Mr. Wilkins," said the man, indicating a portly and benevolent-looking gentleman in a black silk waistcoat.

"What can I do for you, my man?" said Mr. Wilkins.

"I'd like to be in the way of earning an honest half-crown, sir," I replied.

"Very good, my man," said Mr. Wilkins with a smile. "Is there a vacancy to-day, Boldger?" said Mr. Wilkins, turning to a foreman.

"Yes sir, certainly sir," replied the man; "we shall be ready for the gentleman in about twenty minutes."

"Been here before, my man?" said Mr. Wilkins to me, not unkindly.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you'd better put him through the mill, Boldger," said Mr. Wilkins to the foreman.

"Step this way, young man," said the foreman to me.

I followed him into a lavatory.

"There you are," he said. "You're in luck, young man," he went on; "half-a-crown for wearing a new hat for three hours is good pay. You'll be on at three, and you'll be off at six. This gentleman is waiting his turn," he added; "he is one of our regulars."

The "gentleman" who was waiting his turn, was a tatterdemalion wretch, but his neck and face had been carefully washed, and his hair well-combed and brushed. I washed my face and brushed my hair, and in my heart I thought that to wear an unventilated hat, even for three whole hours, couldn't be so very dreadful a punishment after all.

I had reckoned without my host.

"This way, gentlemen, if you please," said the hatter's assistant, as he motioned us to follow him through a door leading towards the basement.

At the end of a passage was a sort of little room with a sloping roof; it was exactly under the shop-

front. Side by side were two easy-chairs, beneath each of which was a winch for raising or lowering the chair to any required height.

My companion took his seat at once; he was evidently used to the ways of the place; then the assistant strapped him in by means of two thick leather bands with massive buckles, one at the neck and the other at the waist. Then the shopman suddenly opened the little trap-door, some twelve inches square, in the low, sloping roof of the apartment, and worked away actively at the winch. The chair slowly rose, and the head of its occupant disappeared through the little trap-door to the shoulders. Then the man turned a large tap, which was affixed to the back of the chair, and motioned me to take my seat in the other one.

"Why do you strap us in?" I said to the man, as I took my seat.

"You'll know why, governor, by the time you've earned that half-crown," said the man with a malignant grin. "Now look here," he continued, "if you want to sneeze, or cough, or anything, get it done now. And don't you go a larking or larking with the boys at the window; if you do, it will be deducted for."

Then he began to wind me up, and I made my first appearance in Mr. Wilkins's shop-front to a round of tumultuous applause from a crowd of idlers in the street, who stared into the shop-window. Then somebody carefully fitted a hat on to my head and gave it a knowing cock. Then the mahogany arrangement was drawn up close to my neck, and there I sat, perfectly comfortable, staring at the crowd of idlers in the street.

And then a draught of cool air began to flow through the holes that surrounded my neck. Mr. Wilkins really took a wonderful amount of trouble to ensure our comfort.

At first the novelty of my situation entirely occupied my mind. I felt inclined to laugh as I thought of myself as a bodiless head, wearing a ventilating hat. The boys in the street, too, mopped and mowed and made grimaces at me. Then I took a look at my fellow-victim out of the corner of my eye. He was evidently already suffering from the effects of his unventilated hat. His teeth were tightly set; he looked anything but happy; great drops of perspiration already stood upon his brow. I didn't trouble myself very much about him.

The time passed pleasantly enough, and I heard the clock of Shoreditch Church at length strike four. As it did so, I was startled to hear the wearer of the unventilated hat give a hollow groan. I looked at him once more out of the corner of my eye. He had become ghastly pale; he looked as if he were melting gradually. In fact, the poor fellow seemed very ill indeed. Strange that a badly ventilated hat should produce such marked effects. Well, it wasn't my business.

After a while the clock of Shoreditch Church

struck half-past four. I heard footsteps in the room below, and at the same time I was deprived of my ventilating hat. A brand new hat was placed upon my head, and the show cards which stood behind our respective heads were exchanged. The draughts of cool air which came through the innumerable little holes in the mahogany flooring around my neck suddenly ceased. A current of heated air supplied its place. I looked out of the corner of my eye at the other head; its face wore an ecstatic smile. Then an extraordinary thing took place. The easy chair in which I was sitting suddenly began to grow warm; it then became actually hot, unpleasantly hot.

I saw through the whole fiendish trick at once. I was to be tortured—tortured for a period of an hour and a half, for the amusement of an idle crowd—in order that the public might be gulled into the purchase of the so-called ventilating hats of the fiend Wilkins.

I felt—but I will not dwell on my agonies; I will not dilate on the horrible sufferings I endured. I was being gradually cooked alive, and I felt that concentrated boiling gravy, not blood, was coursing through my veins. My features were contorted with agony; the crowd in the street outside gave me a tremendous round of applause.

I tried to break loose. As I did so, a voice from the room below uttered the following dreadful threat:

"It's a hundred and twenty now, my man, and if you move I'll make it a hundred and fifty!"

I shed tears of rage, indignation, and suffering; I endured the most dreadful tortures for a whole hour and a half. When I left Wilkins's establishment with half-a-crown in my pocket, I was more dead than alive.

It is the dream of my life that I and Mr. Wilkins, the inventor of the ventilating hat, may meet in some lonely place. I am not a revengeful man, but I feel that I owe Wilkins something that I should like to repay.

C. J. WILLS.

From BLACK AND WHITE.
By permission of the Proprietors.

THE WIZARD'S CURSE.

In the days when I was young, and very foolish, goodness knows!
Twas my painful lot to suffer from a pimple on the nose;
So I went to a Magician, who was noted, at that day,
For the skill with which he conjured such excrescences away.

He pronounced an incantation in a dismal kind of squeak,
And assured me that my pimple would be gone within a week;
Then he caught me to his bosom, brushed away a starting tear,
And demanded twenty guineas, which I thought a trifle dear.

But my pimple did not vanish; nay, I found, to my surprise,
That it grew until it reached a quite unreasonable size.
So I called again one morning at the Necromancer's house,
And informed him, with a stick, that I considered him a "chouse."

He declared he'd have the law of me, and did; but what was worse,
As I turned to quit the premises, he laid on me a curse,
Shouting, "Wiggles, your brutality I'll give you cause to rue;
Your moustache shall be magenta and your whiskers Prussian blue.

"You may dye them ev'ry day, and any colour that you choose,
But whenever you most want them to retain their borrowed hues,
They shall instantly revert to the gay tints that I've decreed,
The effect of which, I may say, will be curious indeed!

"There's a glass upon the mantelpiece, go, look into it well,
Whilst I speak the dread and potent words that constitute my spell;
Jarnibleu! Abracadabra! Hokey pokey winkey wee!
Marantha! Donnerwetter! *Ego maledico te!*"

As his wand he wildly flourished, in accordance with his rules,
I observed, to my dismay, that my moustache was turning gules,
Whilst my whiskers twain, which theretofore had somewhat foxy been,
Changed before my eyes to azure—that is, bright ultramarine.

Panic-stricken, as I realised the horrors of my doom,
I entreated him to spare me, but he bade me leave the room.
"Take, oh, take this bitter curse away!" I sobbed.
He answered "No!
You must wear your beard as best you may. Good morning! You may go."

When I left the wicked Sorcerer distraction tore
my mind,
And I sped away to Truefitt's with the swiftness of
the wind.

"Say, inimitable Artist," I exclaimed, "what must
I do
To get rid of this magenta and this awful Prussian
blue?"

"Nothing simpler," he replied, to my extravagant
delight.

"Our Kallianthesistikon will promptly set you
right;

To your beard the precious liquid you must thrice
a day apply.

Ten-and-six is all we charge for this inestimable
dye!"

Like a shot I paid the money, seized my bottle, and
was gone;

All day long I steeped my beard in Kallianthe-
sistikon.

The magenta changed to yellow—grassy-green
became the blue—

But at last the moustache and whiskers resumed
their normal hue.

* * * * *

The relief that I experienced was thrillingly in-
tense,

And I went on dyeing lavishly, regardless of ex-
pense;

From my memory the details of the curse kept
fading fast,

And the hope that I had dodged it grew to cer-
tainty at last.

* * * * *

Months went by, until I lost my heart to Alex-
andra Brown,

Who had beauty and securities, besides a house in
town.

As one day she smiled upon me with a tenderness
divine,

In a spasm of affection I resolved to make her
mine.

I was kneeling at her feet and gazing fondly on
her eyes,

With a comfortable feeling that I'd gained my
lovely prize,

When a look of ghostly horror on her countenance
appeared,

And she screamed, "Good gracious heavens! what
has happened to your beard?"

"Tis the Wizard's Curse!" I stammered. "I am
seldom taken so.

Pass it over, beauteous angel—if you love me, do
not go!"

But she left me with a shudder, and I staggered to
my feet,
Breathing hideous execrations which I will not
here repeat.

Then I wandered down her street, and, as the
corner I passed by,
On a hoarding near a public-house a picture caught
my eye.

'Twas a bearded and moustachioed face, with whis-
kers all awake,

And a legend underneath, in ten-inch capitals,
"Why shave?"

"Why not shave?" Ah, happy thought! It
flashed like lightning through my brain,
And I started at the double off to Truefitt's once
again.

There arrived, I shouted: "Hither bring your
razor, strop, and hone,

Gifted Artist, shave me closely—shave me to the
very bone!

"Wicked Wizard, I defy you! Your anathema is
naught!"

(Here I yelled "Hooroo!" and capered like a
Highlander distraught.)

"Let my beard and whiskers perish! You forgot
to curse my hair!"

And I laughed as I sank back into the operating-
chair.

With a face as smooth and hairless as a billiard-
ball or glove,

I returned to Alexandra—to my tender, startled
dove.

"They are gone!" I softly whispered. "Wilt re-
ward my sacrifice?

Kiss my cheek, no longer hirsute, but extremely
sleek and nice."

Then she tearfully embraced me, sobbing, "Thine,
for ever thine!"

And I knew that I had won her—that her scrip
would soon be mine.

We were wed; and, thanks to shaving and an
amply furnished purse,

For the Wizard's Malediction neither of us care a
curse!

W. BRATTY-KINGSTON.

From "*My Hansom Lays*."
By permission of the Author.

MY CHAMBER DOOR.

ONCE when I was in a flurry,
In a most prodigious scurry,
Taking, in my frantic hurry,
All my clothing from the drawer,

Scarlet was my face with flushes
For my wild impetuous rushes,
Having finished with my brushes.

Did I hasten to my door;
Did I try in vain to force the patent lock upon
my door.
Only this, and nothing more!

I could hear the carmen ringing,
And I knew that they were bringing
Guests to dine, while I was flinging
All my weight against the door;
And I cried, "Can no one aid me?
How my guests will all upbraid me!
Come and help, ye gods that made me!
And release me, I implore.
Smash the lock or break a panel of this massive
oaken door,
Only this, and nothing more!"

When at last my soul grew calmer,
I remembered that one, Bramah,
Once had told me none could harm a
Door like this when locked for sure.
While these words I stood repeating,
And my guests had sent me greeting,
And proposed a pleasant meeting
After I had smashed the door,
Plainly I could hear them eating, right below
my chamber door,
In the chamber 'neath my door.

Then I rang, and told the butler
He must fetch a smith or cutler,
Or an engineer, still subtler,
To undo my chamber door.
Though workpeople were reposing,
Owing to the Sunday closing,
I could not be left there dozing
On my cheerless chamber floor;
Left there solitary dozing on a cold and cheerless
floor.
Thus I spoke, and nothing more!

Round my lonely chamber pacing,
Sometimes crawling, sometimes racing,
Curious scenes my fancy tracing,
That were never seen before.
Right below my open shutter
Stood a "peeler" in the gutter,
And I plainly heard him mutter:
"He has been and locked his door;
Been and lost the only key, too, that will fit
the blooming door."
Then he laughed, and nothing more.

At this son of some low daughter
Then I aimed my jug of water,
And I reckon that I taught a
Lesson to him, for he swore.

"Surely," cried he, "surely that is
Clumsy work of some d——d cat is——
See how smashed about my hat is,
And my head is awfully sore.
I will draw my faithful truncheon, and this
mystery explore——
'Tis the wind, and nothing more!"

But at last I heard ascending
One who was renowned for mending
Locks, and soon I heard him bending
To observe my chamber door.
Cried he, "You have got a funny
Curious sort of lock, here, sonny!
Did it cost a lot of money?
Have you any keys in store?"
"It is patent," cried I, "noodle! Take and
smash the mouldy door."
Then I watched for something more.

Not another answer made he,
Not another sentence said he,
But with a loud clatter laid he
Several tools upon the floor.
To himself I heard him talking,
And about the landing walking,
Then there came a sound of chalking
From above my chamber door;
From the lovely bust of Venus just above my
chamber door,
Sound of drawing—nothing more!

"What is that, that you are scribbling
There, you second-handed, dribbling,
Lazy, mutton-fisted, quibbling
Jackass with the silent jaw?
How long will you keep me waiting
In this state exasperating?"
Then he answered—execrating,
"Hang your rotten patent door!
While they pay me by the hour I shall not hurry
with the door."
This he said, and nothing more.

And that locksmith, never flitting,
On his workstool still is sitting,
Never quitting—sometimes spitting
On my valued parquet floor.
And his bag with tools is teeming,
Making grating sounds and screaming
Like a drunken giant dreaming,
Or a monstrous fiend scheming
To uproot my chamber door;
Like a spiteful devil scheming to annihilate my
my door.
Only this, and nothing more!

LORD GRANVILLE GORDON.

From "The Legend of Birse."
By permission of the Author.

ABOUT CATS.

He was a seafaring man, I met him on a Hampstead Heath tram, and we discussed the subject of animal sagacity.

"Yes, sir," he said, "monkeys is 'cute. I've come across monkeys as could give points to one or two lubbers I've sailed under; and elephants is pretty spy, if you can believe all that's told of 'em. I've heard some tall tales about elephants. And, of course, dogs has their headscrewed on all right; I don't say as they ain't. But what I do say is: that for straightfor'd, level-headed reasoning, give me cats. You see, sir, a dog, he thinks a powerful deal of a man—never was such a 'cute thing as a man, in a dog's opinion; and he takes good care that everybody knows it. Naturally enough, we say a dog is the most intellectual animal there is. Now a cat, she's got her own opinions about human beings. She don't say much, but you can tell enough to make you anxious not to hear the whole of it. The consequence is, we say a cat's got no intelligence. That's where we let our prejudice steer our judgment wrong. In a matter of plain common sense, there ain't a cat living as couldn't take the lee side of a dog and fly round him. Now, have you ever noticed a dog at the end of a chain, trying to kill a cat as is sitting washing her face three-quarters of an inch out of his reach? Of course you have. Well, who's got the sense out of those two? The cat knows that it ain't in the nature of steel chains to stretch. The dog, who ought, you'd think, to know a darned sight more about 'em than she does, is sure they will if you only bark loud enough.

"Then again, have you ever been made mad by cats screeching in the night, and jumped out of bed and opened the window and yelled at them? Did they ever budge an inch for that, though you shrieked loud enough to skeer the dead, and waved your arms about like a man in a play? Not they. They've turned and looked at you, that's all. 'Yell away, old man,' they've said, 'we like to hear you; the more the merrier.' Then what have you done? Why, you've snatched up a hair-brush, or a boot, or a candlestick, and made as if you'd throw it at them. They've seen your attitude, they've seen the thing in your hand, but they ain't moved a point. They knew as you weren't going to chuck valuable property out of window with the chance of getting it lost or spoiled. They've got sense themselves, and they give you credit for having some. If you don't believe that's the reason, you try showing them a lump of coal, or half a brick, next time—something as they know you *will* throw. Before you're ready to heave it, there won't be a cat within aim.

"Then, as to judgment and knowledge of the world, why dogs are babies to 'em. Have you ever tried telling a yarn before a cat, sir?"

I replied that cats had often been present during

anecdotal recitals of mine, but that, hitherto, I had paid no particular attention to their demeanour.

"Ah, well, you take an opportunity of doing so one day, sir," answered the old fellow; "it's worth the experiment. If you're telling a story before a cat, and she don't get uneasy during any part of the narrative, you can reckon you've got hold of a thing as it will be safe for you to tell to the Lord Chief Justice of England."

"I've got a messmate," he continued, "William Cooley is his name. We call him Truthful Billy. He's as good a seaman as ever trod quarter-deck; but when he gets spinning yarns he ain't the sort of man as I could advise you to rely upon. Well, Billy, he's got a dog, and I've seen him sit and tell yarns before that dog that would make a cat squirm out of its skin, and that dog's taken 'em in and believed 'em. One night, up at his old woman's, Bill told us a yarn by the side of which salt junk two voyages old would pass for spring chicken. I watched the dog to see how he would take it. He listened to it from beginning to end with cocked ears, and never so much as blinked. Every now and then he would look round with an expression of astonishment or delight that seemed to say: 'Wonderful, isn't it!' 'Dear me, just think of it!' 'Did you ever!' 'Well, if that don't beat everything!' He was a chuckle-headed dog; you could have told him anything.

"It irritated me that Bill should have such an animal about him to encourage him, and when he had finished I said to him, 'I wish you'd tell that yarn round at my quarters one evening.'

"Why?" said Bill.

"Oh, it's just a fancy of mine," I said. I didn't tell him I was wanting my old cat to hear it.

"Oh, all right," says Bill, 'you remind me.' He loved yarning, Billy did.

"Next night but one he slings himself up in my cabin, and I does so. Nothing loth, off he starts. There was about half a dozen of us stretched round, and the cat was sitting before the fire fussing itself up. Before Bill had got fairly under weigh, she stops washing and looks up at me, puzzled like, as much as to say, 'What have we got here, a Missionary?'. I signalled to her to keep quiet, and Bill went on with his yarn. When he got to the part about the sharks, she turned deliberately round and looked at him. I tell you there was an expression of disgust on that cat's face as might have made a travelling Cheap Jack ashamed of himself. It was that human, I give you my word, sir, I forgot for the moment as the poor animal couldn't speak. I could see the words that were on its lips: 'Why don't you tell us you swallowed the anchor?' and I sat on tenter-hooks, fearing each instant that she would say them aloud. It was a relief to me when she turned her back on Bill.

"For a few minutes she sat very still, and seemed to be wrestling with herself like I never see a cat more set on controlling its feelings, or that seemed

to suffer more in silence. It made my heart ache to watch it.

"At last Bill came to a point where he and the captain between 'em hold the shark's mouth open while the cabin boy dives in foremost and fetches up, undigested, the gold watch and chain as the bo'sun was a-wearing when he fell overboard; and at that the old cat gave a screech, rolled over on her side with her legs in the air.

"I thought at first the poor thing was dead, but she rallied after a bit, and it seemed as though she had braced herself up to hear the thing out.

"But a little further'on, Bill got too much for her again, and this time she owned herself beat. She rose up and looked round at us: 'You'll excuse me, gentlemen,' she said—leastways that is what she said if looks go for anything—'maybe you're used to this sort of rubbish, and it don't jar on your nerves. With me it's different. I guess I've heard as much of this fool's talk as my constitution will stand, and if it's all the same to you I'll get outside before I'm sick.'

"With that she walked up to the door, and I opened it for her, and she went out.

"You can't fool a cat with talk same as you can a dog."

JEROME K. JEROME.

From "Novel Notes."

By permission of the Author, and

THE LEADENHALL PRESS, LIMITED.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

'Twas Christmas Eve. The frost lay on the road,
And moonlight smote with silver all the fields
Around the gable-ends of an old house
That stood alone, beyond the village-street.
Alone, unvisited by priest or friend,
Shunn'd, as plague-stricken, while its casements
flashed

From their blue diamonds not one welcoming light
To the wayfarer. All was dark within;
Dark without hope—save that the clear white moon
Shone, like God's truth, upon the good and ill
That the room held, wherein a sinful man
Lay dying. On one side his bed there stood
A woman, who had journeyed here in haste,
Flush'd, as the marble statue may be flush'd
By wrathful torch-light. On the other, knelt
A creature, shaken in her dumb despair,
Crush'd, tear-stained. He had been untrue to both,
As only Man can—ne'er baser beasts;
Untrue to vows he pledged unto the one
Before the altar—pledged for weight of gold—
Untrue to honour, lying, while he loved
The other one, betrayed.

The impartial moon
Lit the thin outline of the unloved wife,

Hard, upright, just; and touched the head, bow'd low,

Of her who knelt; and made a halo round
A gold-hair'd child, who played upon the floor
With strings of daisies. O'er the wasted face
Of him who lay a-dying it fell full,
As on an open book, wherein was writ
Reform; no coward dread of punishment
For self, but a great fear for those
He left behind, whose ruin he had wrought.

Then spake the wife to her who knelt, "Go forth!
My place is here, beside my dying lord—
Whom God hath join'd, let no man put asunder."
The woman gave an inarticulate cry;
The child, unconscious, wove its chain of stars.
"O pardon—pardon!" moaned the hapless one.
"I warded you—yes! but knew not all the wrong.
I ask your mercy, as I ask for Christ's,
He who forgave a sinner once, like me,
Perhaps *He* will not shut me out!"

"I do,"

The wife replied. "We cannot both stay here.
The house is mine. You took my husband's love;
His soul—his body—all belonged to you.
My home made desolate—my reverence lost—
My faith destroyed in man; loveless, alone,
No baby-blossom at my breast, have I
Toiled on. Your deed! Living, he was all yours;
Dead, he is mine. Mine now the right to close
The eyes that never yet have look'd with joy
Into mine eyes, as they have into yours!
Why do I claim that right? Why am I come?
Because I would redeem him yet—save him
From passing hence with unrepented sin."

Then gasped the dying man, "I do repent
The more, because I see her agony.
Mine, only mine, the sin—not hers—not hers!
She knew not I was wed. She gave her life—
She, a mere child—into my keeping. Now,
It is in yours; be merciful to her.
Thrust her not out. You, blameless, holy, pure,
Since all is past, and sin outlives not life,
Will you not stoop to lift the fallen up?"
"Sin *doth* outlive life," she in haste replied.
"There is the child—not mine, but hers. And yet
I would not harm it, nor its mother. So,
If poor lip-pardon, that can never reach
The inner heart of wrongs, suffice to soothe
Your dying hour, 'tis yours—'tis hers. But let
Her presence here no more distract your thoughts.
From heaven, not outrage me, your wife."

At once

That young, frail creature, white as drifted snow,
Trembling, arose. "The right is yours." She
bow'd
Her head. "O Love! loved only here too well,
We part, but not for long—stricken unto death
Am I, and shall not linger far behind;

Only"—and here her voice broke down—"the child—
To leave him motherless—without a friend!"

Suddenly, voices from the village-choir,
Singing from house to house their Christmas Song,
Rose in the frosty night, exultant, clear,
As those the Shepherds heard in Bethlehem.

*"Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the new-born King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."*

It seemed to her who stood beside that bed—
The embittered wife, who never had known peace—
A message straight from Him. And she beheld
The heavens open, and saw His face
Filled with divine compassion for the sins
And suffering of His creatures; and she heard
A voice like music, "Inasmuch as ye
Have done it unto one, the least of Mine,
You did it unto Me."

Then all the ice
Frozen by winters on her heart seemed broke,
And Pity welled up as she took the babe
In her wide-open arms, and said, "So be it,
When both are gone, your child shall be as mine.
I take this solemn charge; and if it please
The Lord, the void of love in my lone life
May be refilled."

Then the glazed eyes of him
Who heard her sought, with tenderness unknown
Before, his wife's eyes. The cold fingers pressed
Her hand. That touch healed all the wounded
past,

For, as she stooped to catch the last faint breath,
"Kiss me!" he whispered—and so passed away.

HAMILTON AFDÉ.

By permission of the Author.

GILBERT BECKETT AND THE FAIR SARACEN.

THE last crusader's helm had gleamed
Upon the yellow Syrian shore;
No more the war-worn standards streamed,
The stout knights charged and fell no more;
No more the Paynim grew afraid—
The crescent floated o'er the cross,
But to one simple heathen maid
Her country's gain was bitter loss.

For love, which knows not race or creed,
Had bound her with its subtle chain—
Love, which still makes young hearts to bleed,
For this one, mingled joy with pain,

And left for one brief hour of bliss,
One little span of hopes and fears,
The memory of a parting kiss,
And what poor solace comes of tears.

A lowly English squire was he,
A prisoner chained, enslaved, and sold;
A lady she of high degree.
'Tis an old tale and often told:
'Twas pity bade the brown cheek glow,
'Twas love and pity drew the sigh,
'Twas love that made the soft tears flow,
The sweet sad night she bade him fly.

Far from the scorching Syrian plain
The brave ship bears the Saxon home;
Once more to mists and rains again,
And verdant English lawns, they come.
I know not if as now 'twas then,
Or if the growing ages move
The careless, changeful hearts of men
More slowly to the thoughts of love;

But woman's heart was then, as now,
Tender and passionate and true.
Think, gentle ladies, ye who know
Love's power, what pain that poor heart knew.
How, living always o'er again
The sweet short past, she knew, too late,
'Twas love had bound the captive's chain,
Which broken, left her desolate.

Till by degrees the full young cheek
Grew hollow, and the liquid eyes
Still gazing seaward, large and meek,
Took something of a sad surprise;
As one who learns, with a strange chill,
'Mid youth and wealth's unclouded day,
Of sad lives full of pain and ill,
And thinks, "And am I too as they?"

And by degrees most hateful grew
All things that once she held so dear—
The feathery palms, the cloudless blue,
Tall mosque and loud muezzin clear,
The knights who flocked by blinded street
The lattice lit by laughing eyes,
The songs around the fountain, sweet
To maidens under Eastern skies.

And oft at eve, when young girls told
Tales precious to the girlish heart,
She sat alone, and loved to hold
Communion with her soul apart;
Till, at the last, too great became
The hidden weight of secret care,
And girlish fears and maiden shame
Were gone, and only love was there.

And so she fled. I see her still
In fancy, desolate, alone,
Wander by arid plain and hill,
From early dawn till day was done;

Sunstricken, hungry, thirsty, faint,
By perilous paths I see her move,
Clothed round with pureness like a saint,
And fearless in the might of love.

Till lo! a gleam of azure sea,
And rude ships moored upon the shore.
Strange, yet not wholly strange, for he
Had dazed these mystic depths before.
And some good English seaman bold,
Remembering those he left at home,
Put gently back the offered gold,
And for love's honour bade her come.

And then they sailed. No pirate bark
Swooped on them, for the Power of Love
Watched o'er that precious wandering ark,
And this his tender little dove.
I see those stalwart seamen still
Gaze wondering on that childish form,
And shelter her from harm and ill,
And guide her safe through wave and storm.

Till under greyer skies a gleam
Of white, and taking land she went,
Following our broad, imperial stream,
Or rose-hung lanes of smiling Kent.
Friendless I see her, lonely, weak,
Thro' fields where every flower was strange,
Go forth without a word to speak,
By burgh and thorp and moated grange.

For all that Love himself could teach
This passionate pilgrim to our shore,
Were but two words of Saxon speech,
Two little words and nothing more—
"Gilbert" and "London"; like a flame
To her sweet lips these sounds would come,
* The syllables of her lover's name,
And the far city of his home.

I see her cool her weary feet
In dewy depths of crested grass;
By clear brooks fringed with meadow-sweet,
And daisied meads, I see her pass;
I see her innocent girlish glee,
I see the doubts which on her crowd,
O'erjoyed with bird, or flower, or tree,
Despondent for the fleeting cloud.

I see her passing slow, alone,
By burgh and thorp and moated grange,
Still murmuring softly like a moan
These two brief words in accents strange.
Sometimes would pass a belted earl
With squires behind in brave array;
Sometimes some honest, toilworn churl
Would fare with her till close of day.

The saintly abbess, sweet and sage,
Would wonder as she ambled by,
Or white-plumed knight, or long-haired page
Ride by her with inquiring eye.

The prior would cross himself, and say
His paternosters o'er and o'er;
The gay dames whisper Welladay!
And pity her, and nothing more.

But tender woman, knowing love
And all the pain of loneliness,
Would feel a sweet compassion move,
And welcome her to rest and food,
And walk with her beyond the hill,
And kiss her cheek when she must go;
And "Gilbert" she would murmur still,
And "London" she would whisper low.

And sometimes sottish boors would rise
From wayside tavern, where they sate,
And leer from heated vinous eyes,
And stagger forth with reeling gait,
And from that strong, unswerving will
And clear gaze shrink, as from a blow;
And "Gilbert" she would murmur still,
And "London" she would whisper low.

Then by the broad suburban street,
And city groups that outward stray
To take the evening, and the sweet
Faint breathings of the dying day—
The gay young 'prentice, lithe and slim,
The wimpled maid, demurely shy,
The merchant, somewhat grave and prim,
The courtier with his rolling eye.

And more and more the growing crowd
Would gather, wondering whence she came
And why, with boorish laughter loud,
And jeers which burnt her cheek with flame.
For potent charm to save from ill
But one word she made answer now:
For "Gilbert" she would murmur still,
And "Gilbert" she would whisper low.

Till some good, pitiful soul—not then
Our London was as now o'ergrown—
Pressed through the idle throng of men,
And led her to his home alone,
And signing to her he would find
Him whom she sought, went forth again,
And left her there with heart and mind
Distracted by a new-born pain.

For surely then, when doubt was o'er,
A doubt before a stranger came,
"He loved me not, or loves no more."
Oh, virgin pride! oh, maiden shame!
Almost she fled, almost the past
Seemed better than the pain she knew;
Her veil around her face she cast:
Then the gate swung—and he was true.

Poor child! they christened her, and so
She had her wish. Ah, yearning heart,
Was love so sweet then? would you know
Again the longing and the smart?

Came there no wintry hours when you
Longed for your native skies again,
The creed, the tongue your girlhood knew,
Aye, even the longing and the pain?

Peace! Love is Lord of all. But I,
Seeing her fierce son's mired tomb,
Conjoin with fancy's dreaming eye
This love tale, and that dreadful doom.
Sped hither by a hidden will,
O'er sea and land I watch her go;
"Gilbert" I hear her murmur still,
And "London" still she whispers low.

SIR LEWIS MORRIS.

By permission of the Author.

THE LESSON OF THE WATER-MILL.

LISTEN to the water-mill;
Through the livelong day
How the clicking of its wheel
Wears the hours away!
Languidly the autumn wind
Stirs the forest leaves,
From the field the reapers sing,
Binding up their sheaves;
And a proverb haunts my mind
As a spell is cast;
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Autumn winds revive no more
Leaves that once are shed,
And the sickle cannot reap
Corn once gathered;
Flows the ruffled streamlet on,
Tranquil, deep, and still;
Never gliding back again
To the water-mill:
Truly speaks that proverb old,
With a meaning vast—
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Take the lesson to thyself,
True and loving heart;
Golden youth is fleeting by,
Summer hours depart;
Learn to make the most of life,
Lose no happy day,
Time will never bring thee back.
Chances swept away!
Leave no tender word unsaid,
Love while love shall last;
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

Work while yet the daylight shines,
Man of strength and will!
Never does the streamlet glide
Useless by the mill;

Wait not till to-morrow's sun
Beams upon thy way,
All that thou canst call thine own
Lies in thy "to-day";
Power, and intellect, and health
May not always last;
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

O the wasted hours of life,
That have drifted by!
O the good that might have been—
Lost without a sigh!
Love that we might once have saved
By a single word,
Thoughts conceived, but never penned,
Perishing unheard;—
Take the proverb to thy heart,
Take, and hold it fast:
"The mill cannot grind
With the water that is past."

SARAH DOUDNEY.

From "*Psalms of Life*."

By permission of Messrs. HOULSTON & SONS.

SHATTERED NERVES.

A DUOLOGUE.

MRS. PIERCEY-SHARP, M.D. LADY FLORA.

SCENE.—*Mrs. Piercey-Sharp's Consulting Room.*

MRS. PIERCEY-SHARP. [*Discovered. Looks at her watch.*] A quarter to three. I think I have kept Lady Flora waiting long enough to give her an idea of the extent of my medical practice. To judge by her letter, she is an ordinary specimen of the modern *malade imaginaire*. [*Reads.*] "Dear Madam,—I am suffering from sleeplessness, low spirits, and extreme weakness; in fact, my nerves are completely shattered. I have tried *everything* and *everybody*, but nothing and nobody, not even Dr. Mac Muff himself, has done me any lasting good." I never heard of Mac Muff doing anybody good yet. [*Reads.*] "So, having heard of you as a nervous specialist, I am anxious to try you." That's the worst of my patients—they do *try* me! Oh, dear! I'm sick of being consulted by these worrying women. I think I shall make a new departure and advertise myself, "Mrs. Piercey-Sharp, consulting specialist for nervous young men." Oh! there are plenty of them about. *Fin de siècle* young men. I don't know how Mr. Piercey-Sharp might like it, but as he does not practise (except on the banjo—and he's very much out of practice even on that), I don't see how he could expect to be called in for a consultation. [*Looks at her watch.*] Ten minutes to three. Yes, I can see her now. [*Rings. After a pause, enter LADY FLORA. Mrs. P.-S. assumes a*

professional manner.] So sorry not to have been able to see you sooner, but the fact is, my last patient has only this moment left me.

LADY FLORA. [*In a very weak voice.*] Yes, I've been waiting ever since two o'clock, and it's so bad for my nerves to be kept waiting.

MRS. P.-S. Ah! I see your nerves are shattered. Now, if you could describe me your symptoms I should be better able to diagnose your case. [*Aside.*] Always use a long word to a nervous woman: it gives her confidence. [*Places a chair for LADY FLORA, who turns its back to the light.*] Facing the light, if you please. [*Turns chair round.*]

LADY F. [*As before.*] But I never face the light. It's so bad for my nerves to face the light. [*Submits all the same, and sits.*] And now I'll try and tell you something of what I feel.

MRS. P.-S. I beg your pardon, but could you raise your voice a little? I can hardly hear what you say.

LADY F. I don't think I could. It's so bad for my nerves to raise my voice. But, as I was saying, I feel as if—as if I didn't feel anything at all. And sometimes I feel as if I'd got nothing at all in my head—no brains whatever, in fact—and that *can't* be right. And sometimes I feel as if my head were going round and round and round! [*While describing her case her voice improves.*]

MRS. P.-S. Like a weathercock; just so. Oh, your nerves are quite shattered.

LADY F. [*Quite pleased.*] That's just it. And sometimes, particularly at night, I feel as if I were being smothered—and it's so bad for my nerves for me to feel smothered. And then I scream, shriek, yell, and then I wake up.

MRS. P.-S. [*Aside.*] Yes, wake up the household, I suppose. [*Aloud.*] Oh, your nerves are decidedly shattered.

LADY F. That's just what it is. And sometimes I feel—oh! so bad! as if I couldn't stand anything. If my maid runs a hairpin into me, I throw the brushes at her simply. I pay her extra—so she understands—but it's very bad for my nerves to have to throw the brushes at her.

MRS. P.-S. Nothing could be worse, except, perhaps, to have the brushes thrown at you. Oh, your nerves are completely shattered.

LADY F. That's just what it is. [*Aside.*] Dear me! what a comfort it is to have found someone who thoroughly understands me at last. It's so bad for my nerves not to be understood. [*Aloud.*] Well, and then I take cold very easily, and my whole life is positively spent in avoiding draughts.

MRS. P.-S. Oh! you must have enough to do.

LADY F. I have. It's so bad for my nerves to be in a draught, and people are too inconsiderate! They will put me to sit either between two doors or two windows, or a window and a door, or a door and a fireplace, or two fireplaces, or two fans; and you've no idea what a draught two fans can create! And they will not see the necessity for stopping up

the keyholes. But the amount of air that comes in by the keyhole is sometimes enough to bring on inflammation of the windpipe. [*In her excitement she speaks very loud.*]

MRS. P.-S. [*Putting her hands to her ears.*] I beg your pardon, but could you control your voice a little? I am not deaf. [*Aside.*] Shattered nerves!

LADY F. [*Fretfully.*] But it's so bad for my nerves for me to control my voice. And so, as I was saying, the only thing for me to do in a draught is to breathe through the nose, and not speak.

MRS. P.-S. [*Aside.*] Safe, if not socable! [*Aloud.*] My dear Lady Flora, there is no doubt of it, your nerves are completely shattered—completely. Now, I should like to ask you a few questions. [*Pauses; then suddenly.*] What do you drink?

LADY F. Linseed-tea—very weak. You see, there's nothing else I can touch with any safety. Wine—well, nobody in their senses drinks wine—nowadays. Coffee, cocoa, milk, they're all played out, aren't they? Tea—well, tea is sheer poison, unless each person has a separate pot. Hot water is too weakening; cold water too bracing. Sir Maximilian Croker ordered me ammoniated quinine at all my meals, and I took it for a year, till I found myself getting deaf; so I went to Mac Muff, and he said if I had taken it another week I should have been dead! And he told me linseed-tea is the *only* thing for *everybody*—and I hear they've a perfectly excellent recipe for it at the clubs!

MRS. P.-S. [*Making a note.*] Ah! Mac Muff has taken shares in a linseed-tea plantation. Now—what time do you go to bed?

LADY F. Oh! I've given up going to bed. You see, about two months ago I had a pain in my elbow—here, just on the bone. Such a funny pain!

MRS. P.-S. Hum! funny bone, funny pain. Naturally. Yes?

LADY F. Well, I tried everything; and at last I went to Miss Hartmann—you know—Japanese gymnastics. And she told me that my elbows were very congested, and that the worst thing for me, with my congested elbows, was to sleep in a bed, and that we should *all* be much healthier if we slept in hammocks. So I've had one hung from the ceiling of my room; and she said the higher the better—the getting in and out would be such good exercise.

MRS. P.-S. [*Making a note.*] Miss Hartmann has a brother in the stores who gets a commission on every hammock he sells. Now—do you take a hot or a cold bath?

LADY F. Oh, neither. I gave up bathing ages ago! It's so bad for my nerves to take a bath. You know, Croker never allows any of his patients to do it. He says that no one who takes a bath can possibly be in a good state of health.

MRS. P.-S. I know he does. And he prescribes spirits of wine, doesn't he?

LADY F. Eau de Cologne. He orders all his patients to rub themselves from head to foot with Eau de Cologne.

MRS. P.-S. [*Making a note.*] Hum! Lady Croker's money was made in Eau de Cologne. Now—what sort of clothing do you wear? You've not given *that* up, I see.

LADY F. Well, no. I went to a man in Paris—I forgot his name—and he told me that the less clothing I wore the better; but I thought, on the whole, it would be such a shock—

MRS. P.-S. To your friends. I think, you were perfectly right. [*Makes a note.*] And now, what about your diet?

LADY F. Oh! I've tried everything. I used to be told that little and often was the thing for me; but now I find that much and often suits me best.

MRS. P.-S. Just what I should imagine with shattered nerves—like yours.

LADY F. At eight, when I'm called, buttered toast and two cups of tea—linseed-tea, you know. At nine, when I'm half through my dressing, Brand's essence; at ten, breakfast—

MRS. P.-S. And what do you understand by breakfast?

LADY F. Poached eggs, boiled ham, kidneys, muffins, pickled sardines, marmalade, and that sort of thing. At half-past eleven more Brand's essence; at half-past twelve a glass of port wine—

MRS. P.-S. Port wine? I thought you told me you never drank anything but linseed tea?

LADY F. Oh, well, it's only on Mondays, when I go through the weekly bills. It's so bad for my nerves to go through the weekly bills!

MRS. P.-S. Nothing could be worse, [*aside*] except, perhaps, to go through the Bankruptcy Court. [*Aloud.*] What time do you have luncheon?

LADY F. Two o'clock [*dejectedly*], and I cannot say that I have much appetite for my luncheon!

MRS. P.-S. Ah! I'm not surprised to hear that.

[*Makes a note.*]

LADY F. At three I have a cup of coffee—

MRS. P.-S. Coffee?

LADY F. Oh, well, it's only when I have friends to luncheon. It's so bad for my nerves to have friends!

MRS. P.-S. Nothing could be worse, [*aside*] except, perhaps, to have enemies. [*Aloud.*] Yes?

LADY F. After that I get on pretty well through the afternoon with a few meat lozenges, till five o'clock tea—linseed-tea, of course—when I make a point of eating a good meal of bread-and-butter and cake, and I generally *force* myself to eat some sandwiches, as it is such a long time to go without food till dinner, and it's so bad for my nerves to go without food. Eight o'clock dinner, as a rule. Of course, if it is later, I have a cup of beef-tea while I'm dressing. Arrowroot when I go to bed, and sandwiches by my bedside, in case I should wake in the night and feel hungry.

MRS. P.-S. But tell me now—do you ever feel hungry?

LADY F. *Never*—in the ordinary sense of the term. You understand, I don't eat because I'm hungry. It's so bad for my nerves for me to be hungry.

MRS. P.-S. Ah! Your nerves are—more than shattered! Now, let me see. [*Counts on her fingers.*] Tea and buttered toast at eight; Brand's essence at nine; breakfast at ten; more Brand at half-past eleven; port wine at half-past twelve—

LADY F. Only on Mondays—

MRS. P.-S. Luncheon at two; coffee at three; meat lozenges at four; tea with sandwiches at five; dinner at eight; arrowroot at bed-time; sandwiches in the night. Is that all?

LADY F. [*Considering.*] Yes—that's all.

MRS. P.-S. You're sure that is all?

LADY F. Yes. Now, do you consider that much?

MRS. P.-S. A good deal—for one whose nerves are shattered—like yours.

LADY F. I see you understand my case. Now, isn't it hard that I, of all people in the world, should be a martyr to my nerves? Dear Mrs. Piercey-Sharp, if I were careless or imprudent, like some persons I know, I could understand it. But I positively assure you my nerves are never out of my thoughts for a moment.

MRS. P.-S. You needn't tell me that.

LADY F. [*In a tone of the deepest self-interest.*] I never accept an invitation, I never engage in any occupation, I never take up a book, I never form a fresh friendship, without considering the effect it may have on my nerves. I assure you I'm not exaggerating.

MRS. P.-S. No, no, no; I don't suppose you are.

LADY F. [*As before.*] I have specifics for every infection, antidotes for every poison. I [*in a tone of triumph*].—I have got a microbe-killer!

MRS. P.-S. Ah! you have? I hope it's properly broken in!

LADY F. [*Nervously.*] Oh—well—I *believe* it is. But is that very important?

MRS. P.-S. Of the utmost importance. Don't you see, if your microbe-killer isn't properly broken in, instead of killing the microbe, it might kill you.

LADY F. Might it really?

MRS. P.-S. Oh, it's very well known! There's nothing so dangerous as an untrained microbe-killer. We don't understand much as yet about their manners and customs; but they're not things to play tricks with or make pets of. Well, I think I *quite* understand your case. [*Assumes a very professional manner.*] You are suffering, Lady Flora [*LADY FLORA shows the greatest interest*], from an attack of acute self-concentration which has resulted in a very dilapidated state of the nerves. Now, if you will follow the regimen which

I shall prescribe, I think we shall see a marked improvement in the course of the next few weeks. In the first place, I must restrict you to three meals a day—breakfast, luncheon, and dinner.

LADY F. But I shall feel so hungry—and it's so bad for my nerves to feel hungry.

MRS. P.-S. Not at all. It's so bad for your nerves not to feel hungry. Secondly, I should like you to take an iced shower-bath every morning at six—

LADY F. An iced shower-bath? But I shall be knocked silly!

MRS. P.-S. Not at all; you're too far gone for that. And, most important of all—I must insist on your going through my new method—

LADY F. [*Eagerly.*] And that is?

MRS. P.-S. Shaking—a good sound shaking, two or three times a day. Never heard of it? No, I daresay not. It's quite new. But it's far more efficacious than massage, or gymnastics, or hypnotism for shattered nerves—like yours.

LADY F. [*Rather bewildered.*] But—but—how am I to get it done?

MRS. P.-S. Oh, it's very easily done. Your maid, at whom you throw the brushes, might do it for you; or your husband, he's bigger and stronger, most likely; or—I'll come and do it myself, if you like.

LADY F. Oh, thanks; but I'll see if I can get it done at home first—if you will write full instructions.

MRS. P.-S. Oh, yes, I'll write full instructions. Finally, avoid specifics against infection, destroy your antidotes to poison, and have nothing whatever to do with the microbe-killer.

LADY F. But I shall never feel safe! And it's so bad for my nerves not to feel safe!

MRS. P.-S. Not at all; you'll feel ever so much safer. Give up worrying your nerves, and your nerves will give up worrying you. It's the simplest thing in the world.

LADY F. [*Annoyed.*] I don't believe you do understand my case after all. Perhaps you will be so good as to tell me what you really believe to be the matter with me.

MRS. P.-S. My dear lady, there is nothing whatever the matter with you.

LADY F. [*Rising in anger.*] Nothing the matter with me?

MRS. P.-S. Nothing whatever. [*Rises also.*]

LADY F. [*As before.*] Do you call nerves nothing?

MRS. P.-S. Not much.

LADY F. Not much? I should like to know how you'd like to have such nerves as mine?

MRS. P.-S. Oh, I wouldn't have them on any account—not if you'd pay me to have them, I wouldn't! They are sometimes temper, sometimes selfishness—very often a disordered liver, the result of over-eating. Oh, yes! I know I'm brutal, but brutality is the only cure for shattered nerves—like yours.

LADY F. I don't know what you mean by brutality; but let me tell you, Mrs. Piercey-Sharp, it is a very great impertinence to say what you think, and it is exceedingly bad for my nerves—

MRS. P.-S. Not at all. It is the best thing in the world for your nerves for me to say what I think.

LADY F. [*Excited.*] Don't contradict me. It's exceedingly bad for my nerves to be contradicted.

MRS. P.-S. Not at all; it's the best thing in the world for your nerves, to be contradicted. And as my fee for a first consultation is three guineas, I am bound for that to give my patients an honest opinion. [*Bows.*]

LADY F. [*Very excited.*] Three guineas? You expect me to pay you three guineas for telling me I've nothing the matter with me? Why, do you know that Croker and MacMuff themselves don't take more for telling me I've every complaint under the sun?

MRS. P.-S. If you were satisfied with Croker and MacMuff, why did you come to me?

LADY F. [*As before.*] Why did I come to you? I really don't know why I did come to you! Because—because—I wanted change.

MRS. P.-S. Hum! Pity—you could hardly expect a specialist to give change for three guineas! [*Looks at her watch.*] Very sorry, Lady Flora, but I have an appointment at half-past three, and I think my carriage is at the door.

LADY F. [*Wildly excited.*] Oh, yes! dismiss my case—that's all of a piece with the rest. Now, Croker and MacMuff would sit and listen to me by the hour. Oh, these women doctors are no good at all! I shall go back to the men. It's the worst thing in the world for my nerves, not to be listened to. [*Going.*] Do you still persist I have nothing the matter with me?

MRS. P.-S. Nothing whatever, if you'd only believe it.

LADY F. I won't believe it. I don't wish to believe it. There'd be an end of my nerves altogether if I believed it!

MRS. P.-S. Yes, there would be an end of your nerves—your shattered nerves!

LADY F. I know it, and it would be the worst thing in the world for my nerves if there was to be an end of them! [*At the door.*] Good morning, Mrs. Piercey-Sharp. You won't be surprised if I let the whole of London know what I think of you!

MRS. P.-S. [*Following.*] I shall be greatly indebted to you, Lady Flora. My fortune will be made. [*Aside.*] I thought the truth would do it! There's nothing pays like novelty. Now she may go back to Croker and MacMuff; and I—I shall prescribe for "the Nervous Man!" [*Exeunt.*]

H. L. CHILDE-PEMBERTON.

From "Twenty Minutes."
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THE HERO OF THE FLAME.

A NOBLE mien, a faithful heart, a courage rare
 had he,
 This Fireman Will of great renown, as dauntless
 as could be;
 His comrades loved him one and all, he was so
 staunch and true,
 His handsome face and cheery smile much com-
 mendation drew;
 But more than all, chivalrous deeds had merited a
 name
 Of which he justly felt well proud—"The Hero of
 the Flame!"

So handsome was this Fireman Will that all the
 girls around
 Were much concerned to find that he his lady-love
 had found,
 A blue-eyed belle, sweet, young, and true; and
 very proud was she
 To walk beside her gallant Will; but just as proud
 was he
 To know that he had won her heart, for she was
 blithe and fair,
 And all the people round about breathed blessings
 on the pair.

One night as William stood beside this Nell he
 hoped to wed,
 His arm entwined around her waist, the while she
 hung her head;
 For he had asked that question, lads, which all of
 you can guess,
 And wondered why she took so long to simply
 answer "Yes;"
 A cry of "Fire!" rang through the air, and
 William hied away
 To do his duty like a man, ere she had named the
 day.

The flames were raging furiously as William
 mounted high
 To save a woman's only child—he vow'd he would,
 or die!
 He heeded not the stifling smoke, the red-tongued
 flames, the heat,
 He merely heard that mother's cry of anguish in
 the street;
 On—on—he fought, until he conquered in the
 strife
 To hear the ringing cheers without, for he had
 saved a life!

His duty done, brave Fireman Will his loved one's
 presence sought,
 A mother's blessings followed him, but 'dearly
 these were bought.

The flames had scorched his handsome face; great
 tears stood in his eyes,
 For much he feared his lovely Nell his hand would
 now despise;
 Quoth he, "Now you'll not marry me, disfigured
 by the Flame!"—
 She promptly answered, "Yes, I will, and proud
 to bear your name!"

Three cheers for Fireman Will, my lads, "The
 Hero of the Flame!"
 Who never flinched at Duty's call, right well he
 won his name.
 No soldier on the battlefield, no sailor on the sea,
 Was ever such a hero, lads, or half so brave as he!

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

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A DREAM OF THE FUTURE.

I DREAMT a dream, a dazzling dream, of a green isle
 far away,
 Where the glowing West to the ocean's breast
 calleth the dying day;
 And that island green was as fair a scene, as ever
 man's eye did see,
 With its chieftains bold and its temples old, and
 its homes and its altars free!
 No foreign foe did that green isle know, no stranger
 band it bore,
 Save the merchant train from sunny Spain, and
 from Africa's golden shore!
 And the young man's heart would fondly start, and
 the old man's eye would smile,
 As their thoughts would roam o'er the ocean foam
 to that lone and "holy isle!"

Years passed by, and the Orient sky blazed with a
 new-born light,
 And Bethlehem's star shone bright afar o'er the
 lost world's darkness night;
 And the diamond shrines from plundered mines,
 and the golden fanes of Jove,
 Melted away in the blaze of day, at the simple
 spell-word—Love!
 The light serene o'er that island green played with
 its loving beams,
 And the fires of Baal waxed dim and pale like the
 stars in the morning streams!
 And 'twas joy to hear, in the bright air clear, from
 out each sunny glade,
 The tinkling bell from the quiet cell, or the cloister's
 tranquil shade!

A cloud of night o'er that dream so bright, soon
 with its dark wing came,
 And the happy scene of that island green was lost
 in blood and shame;

For its kings unjust betrayed their trust, and its queens, though fair, were frail,
 And a robber band, from a stranger land, with their war-whoops filled the gale;
 A fatal spell off that green isle fell, a shadow of death and gloom
 Passed withering o'er, from shore to shore, like the breath of the foul simoom;
 And each green hill's side was crimson dyed, and each stream rolled red and wild
 With the mingled blood of the brave and good—of mother, and maid, and child!

Dark was my dream, though many a gleam of hope through that black night broke,
 Like a star's bright form through a whistling storm, or the moon through a midnight oak!
 And many a time, with its wings sublime, and its robes of saffron light,
 Would the morning rise on the eastern skies, but to vanish again at night!
 For in abject prayer the people there still raised their fettered hands,
 When the sense of right and the power to smite are the spirit that commands;
 For those who would sneer at the mourner's tear, and heed not the suppliant sigh,
 Would bow in awe to that first great law, a banded nation's cry!

At length arose o'er that isle of woes, a dawn with a steadier smile,
 And in happy hour a voice of power awoke the slumbering isle!
 And the people all obeyed the call of their chief's unscathed hand,
 Vowing to raise, as in ancient days, the name of their own dear land!
 My dawn grew bright as the sunbeam's light, as I watched that isle's career,
 Through the varied scene and the joys serene of many a future year;
 And oh! what a thrill did my bosom fill, as I gazed on a pillared pile,
 Where a Senate once more in power watched o'er the rights of that lone green isle!

DENIS FLORENCE MACCARTHY.

By permission of Messrs. M. H. GILL & SON.

A GIFT OF THE GODS.

CLEON, the High Priest, reviled the gods. Cleon had honours, and the populace brought him offerings that spared him from the lower needs. He had his villa, in whose garden bloomed fair flowers. He had taken to wife a woman so fair that men forgot when she walked in her garden to gaze upon those flowers. Cleon had wisdom and learning.

But herein was shown the folly of the gods; he might have been wholly blessed but for a small thing—they had forgotten to give Cleon eyes. So the flowers bloomed fair, and Aglaia fairer, yet Cleon, who could smell the flowers' perfume and hear her voice, could not behold the glory of their beauty.

The gods forgot. There was the athlete Glaucus; upon him they had lavished gifts abundant—youth, strength, fleetness, high courage, and manly beauty. In the games he had won the parsley crown, and none could wrest it from him; yet old Cleon, whose ears were doubly keen because his orbs were sightless, heard in his voice the note of sadness born of hope denied—heard the sigh that told of some desire unfulfilled, more treasured than the gifts rained so abundantly.

Cleon, the soothsayer, had said to him:

"Mine eyes are sightless, but behind those orbs, wherein there is no light, there is that sightless vision which can pierce the realms of the untold and the to-be. They cannot read the tablet and the papyrus, yet they can read men's hearts, and in thy heart they read of vain desire that, unfulfilled, gnaws thy young life to shreds."

No word said Glaucus, but he hung his brow, his cheeks were flushed, and he cast down his eyes as if he feared old Cleon's sightless orbs might read his soul.

Then Cleon sought the temple, stood before the altar of high Jove, and cried aloud:—

"Oh, gods, why dwell ye for so long on high? Ye seek not what the hearts of men desire, but cast your gifts at random. Gods, draw near within the sound of mortal voices, so that ye shall learn from earthly men what gifts are best for them. Give me, great gods, my sight—naught else do I desire—no other gift doth sweet Aglaia yearn for. Give me eyes, that I may see her face and she may reap the harvest of full joy in knowing that her loving and beloved beholds her loveliness. And, gods! give unto Glaucus that one gift denied—the love he yearneth for; the priceless prize more dear to him than all the boons that ye have showered upon him."

"And lo! the gods heard Cleon's prayer. And they were angered, and, as is their wont when angered, they bestowed the gift till then withheld.

When he reached the portals of the temple, and he turned his face toward the valley stretching at his feet—upon the dome of purple sky that arched from horizon to horizon—he cried aloud with mighty fear and soul-enthraling joy.

He saw.

Ay, Cleon was new born! The man of years, of wisdom, and of honour, at a bound reached the great altitude till now denied to him, though granted to the children. He saw the glory of the sky, the grandeur of the sun, the loveliness of earth, the grass, the trees, the flowers—saw the golden sunbeams flashing in the river's breast;

and with the light to his old eyes came tears, and from his heart great sobs of joy, and all his soul was clothed in awe.

Onward he ran, possessed with one immense desire, to bear the news to Aglaia—to cry to her, “I see! I see!”—to gaze upon the features that till now he had only touched and dreamed of. As he passed swiftly on, the people in the marketplace, the Forum, and the streets turned to gaze after the old man with the silver hair, who, with swift sandals and flowing robe, pressed on, and then said, marvelling, “Lo, how blind Cleon threads his way across the city! Truly the gods are wise and merciful; they quicken senses that are given so that they may perform the tasks of those withheld. The gods are wise as they are good, and good as they are wise.” He would have cried out, “Glory to the gods, I see! I see!” but that he treasured the good news that they might fall with virgin gladness on Aglaia’s ears.

On he pressed—learning by sight the road his feet had known—halting anon to touch what he beheld, and learn its office by the touch. Sense of touch was so intense and keen, his sight so long withheld, that now and then he halted, feeling walls, trees, and pillars, and thus learning where he stood.

At last he came in view of one fair villa with a shining dome that in the sunlight gleamed like gold against the blue of heaven. With his right hand he touched a cedar bark, then knew he stood within the shadow of his home.

He passed through the courtyard, passed the oleanders, the myrtle, and laurels, his soul drinking their beauty through his new-found eyes. At last he drew apart the curtains and stood in the doorway of the chamber wherein Aglaia sat. He had known that she was beautiful, his sense of touch had told him how soft her cheeks, how silken her tresses, how exquisite her form and features in their lines and curves, how small her hands, her ears, her feet, how large her eyes, how exquisite the oval of her face. But now he saw that she was fair—beheld the sunbeams twining in her tresses; even as the clustering grapes afforded to his late opened eyes beauty distinct to that of touch or taste, so did that mouth whose lips his own had oftentimes kissed. Aglaia was his wife, his other soul, life of his life—all his being had gone out to her in love of her: he saw her smile and he adored.

“Aglaia!” he cried in ecstasy.

She started. He had gained entrance unseen.

“My lord!” she cried. The smile died, and Cleon wondered why.

In the shadow the old man beheld the form of Glaucus.

How noble Glaucus was to look upon. What a flash in his eye—what splendour on his brow. His firm-set lips, his quivering nostrils told that there was iron in his frame, his will, his heart.

Aglaia murmured honeyed words of welcome, laid her head upon her husband’s heart—then drew apart—and then—

Ye gods! even while her lips were gushing words of loyal tenderness for Cleon—her hand was clasp- ing that of Glaucus—her eyes were fixed on his— and his on hers.

Then over the soul of Cleon came a darkness deeper than the pall that had for sixty years hung over his eyes.

They knew not that the gods had sent him sight, and ever and anon their traitor lips met in long and silent kisses.

And Cleon saw that the gods to crush him had granted all his prayers. To him had been given sight, and to the athlete the love wherefor his heart had sickened.

He turned away.

“Gods, yet another gift,” he cried. “Swift death!”

He sought the terrace, strode towards where the marble pillars ceased, where the cliff fell sheer deep down. He paused not. “Gods, this boon—swift death!” he cried again, then down the steep fell like a fragment of the rock slipped from its face.

And they who found him said, “Alas, blind Cleon! Had the gods granted him sight this had not been!”

H. T. JOHNSON.

By permission of the Author.

LORRAINE, LORRAINE, LORRÉE.

“ARE you ready for your steeple-chase, Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrée?”

Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum, Barum,
Barum, Barea.

You’re booked to ride your capping race to-day at Coulterlee,

You’re booked to ride Vindictive, for all the world to see,

To keep him straight, and keep him first, and win the race for me.

Barum, Barum,” etc.

She clasped her new-born baby, poor Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrée,

“I cannot ride Vindictive, as any man might see, And I will not ride Vindictive, with this baby on my knee;

He’s killed a boy, he’s killed a man, and why must he kill me?”

“Unless you ride Vindictive, Lorraine, Lorraine, Lorrée,

Unless you ride Vindictive to-day at Coulterlee, And land him safe across the brook, and win the blank for me,

It’s you may keep your baby, for you’ll get no keep from me.”

"That husbands could be cruel," said Lorraine,
 Lorraine, Lorrée,
 "That husbands could be cruel, I have known for
 seasons three;
 But oh! to ride Vindictive while a baby cries for
 me,
 And be killed across a fence at last for all the world
 to see!"

She mastered young Vindictive—Oh! the gallant
 lass was she,
 And kept him straight and won the race as near
 as near could be;
 But he killed her at the brook against a pollard
 willow tree,
 Oh, he killed her at the brook, the brute, for all
 the world to see,
 And no one but the baby cried for poor Lorraine
 Lorrée.

REV. CHARLES KINGSLEY.

By permission of Messrs. MACMILLAN & Co.

THE LAST REDOUBT.

KACELYEVO's stole still felt
 The cannon's bolt and the rifles' pelt;
 For a last redoubt up the hill remained,
 By the Russ yet held, by the Turk not gained.

Mehemet Ali stroked his beard;
 His lips were clinched and his look was weird;
 Round him were ranks of his ragged folk,
 Their faces blackened with blood and smoke!

"Clear me the Muscovite out!" he cried,
 Then the name of "Allah!" echoed wide,
 And the rifles were clutched, and the bayonets
 lowered,
 And on to the last redoubt they poured.

One fell, and a second quickly stopped
 The gap that he left when he reeled and dropped;
 The second,—a third straight filled his place;
 The third,—and a fourth kept up the race.

Many a fox in the mud was crushed,
 Many a throat that cheered was hushed,
 Many a heart that sought the crest,
 Found Allah's throne and a houri's breast.

Over their corpses the living sprang,
 And the ridge with their musket-battle rang,
 Till the forces that lined the last redoubt
 Could see their faces and hear their shout.

In the redoubt a fair form towered,
 That cheered up the brave and chid the coward;
 Brandishing blade with a gallant air,
 His head erect and his temples bare.

"Fly! they are on us!" his men implored;
 But he waved them on with waving sword.
 "It cannot be held; 'tis no shame to go."
 But he stood with his face set hard to the foe.

Then clung they about him, and tugged, and
 knelt:

He drew a pistol from out his belt,
 And fired it blank at the first who set
 Foot on the edge of the parapet.

Over that first one toppled; but on
 Clambered the rest till their bayonets shone,
 As hurriedly fled his men dismayed,
 Not a bayonet's length from the length of his
 blade.

"Yield!" But aloft his steel he flashed,
 And down on their steel it ringing clashed,
 Then back he reeled with a bladeless hill,
 His honour full, but his life-blood spilt.

Mehemet Ali, came and saw
 The riddled breast and the tender jaw.
 "Make him a bier of your arms," he said,
 "And daintily bury this dainty dead."

They lifted him up from the dabbled ground;
 His limbs were shapely, and soft and round,
 No down on his lip, on his cheek no shade—
 "Bismillah!" they cried, "'tis an Infidel maid!"

"Dig her a grave where she stood and fell,
 'Gainst the jackals' scratch and the vulture's
 snell.

Did the Muscovite men like their maidens fight,
 In their lines we had scarcely supped to-night."

So a deeper trench 'mong the trenches there
 Was dug, for the form as brave as fair;
 And none, till the Judgment trump and shout,
 Shall drive her out of the Last Redoubt.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

By permission of the Author.

GILRAY'S FLOWER-POT.

I CHARGE Gilray's unreasonableness to his ignoble
 passion for cigarettes; and the story of his flower-
 pot has therefore an obvious moral. The want of
 dignity he displayed about that flower-pot, on his
 return to London, would have made any one sorry
 for him. I had my own work to look after, and
 really could not be tending his chrysanthemum all
 day. After he came back, however, there was no
 reasoning with him, and I admit that I never did
 water his plant, though always intending to do so.

The great mistake was in not leaving the flower-
 pot in charge of William John. No doubt I readily
 promised to attend to it, but Gilray deceived me by

speaking as if the watering of a plant was the merest pastime. He had to leave London for a short provincial tour, and, as I see now, took advantage of my good nature.

As Gilray had owned his flower-pot for several months, during which time (I take him at his word) he had watered it daily, he must have known he was misleading me. He said that you got into the way of watering a flower-pot regularly just as you wind up your watch. That certainly is not the case. I always wind up my watch, and I never watered the flower-pot. Of course, if I had been living in Gilray's rooms with the thing always before my eyes I might have done so. I proposed to take it into my chambers at the time; but he would not hear of that. Why? How Gilray came by his chrysanthemum I do not inquire; but whether, in the circumstances, he should not have made a clean breast of it to me is another matter. Undoubtedly it was an unusual thing to put a man to the trouble of watering a chrysanthemum daily without giving him its history. My own belief has always been that he got it in exchange for a pair of boots and his old dressing-gown. He hints that it was a present; but, as one who knows him well, I may say that he is the last person a lady would be likely to give a chrysanthemum to. Besides, if he was so proud of the plant, he should have stayed at home and watered it himself.

He says that I never meant to water it, which is not only a mistake but unkind. My plan was to run downstairs immediately after dinner every evening and give it a thorough watering. One thing or another, however, came in the way. I often remembered about the chrysanthemum while I was in the office; but even Gilray could hardly have expected me to ask leave of absence merely to run home and water his plant. You must draw the line somewhere, even in a Government office. When I reached home I was tired, inclined to take things easily, and not at all in a proper condition for watering flower-pots. Then Arcadians would drop in. I put it to any sensible man or woman, could I have been expected to give up my friends for the sake of a chrysanthemum? Again, it was my custom of an evening, if not disturbed, to retire with my pipe into my cane chair, and there pass the hours communing with great minds, or when the mood was on me, trifling with a novel. Often when I was in the middle of a chapter Gilray's flower-pot stood up before my eyes crying for water. He does not believe this, but it is the solemn truth. At those moments it was touch-and-go whether I watered his chrysanthemum or not. Where I lost myself was in not hurrying to his rooms at once with a tumbler. I said to myself that I would go when I had finished my pipe; but by that time the flower-pot had escaped my memory. This may have been weakness; all I know is that I should have saved myself much annoyance if I had risen and watered the chrysanthemum then

and there. But would it not have been rather hard on me to have had to forsake my books for the sake of Gilray's flowers and flower-pots and plants and things? What right has a man to go and make a garden of his chambers?

All the three weeks he was away, Gilray kept pestering me with letters about his chrysanthemum. He seemed to have no faith in me—a detestable thing in a man who calls himself your friend. I had promised to water his flower-pot; and between friends a promise is surely sufficient. It is not so, however, when Gilray is one of them. I soon hated the sight of my name in his handwriting. It was not as if he had said outright, that he wrote entirely to know whether I was watering his plant. His references to it were introduced with all the appearance of after-thoughts. Often they took the form of postscripts: "By the way, are you watering my chrysanthemum?" or "The chrysanthemum ought to be a beauty by this time;" or, "You must be quite an adept now at watering plants." Gilray declares now that in answer to one of these infamous epistles, I wrote to him saying that I "had just been watering his chrysanthemum." My belief is that I did no such thing; or if I did, I meant to water it as soon as I had finished my letter. (He has never been able to bring this home to me, he says, because he burned my correspondence. As if a business man would destroy such a letter!) It was yet more annoying when Gilray took to post-cards. To hear the postman's knock and then discover, when you are expecting an important communication, that it is only a post-card about a flower-pot—that is really too bad. And then I consider that some of the post-cards bordered upon insult. One of them said, "What about chrysanthemum?—reply at once." This was just like Gilray's overbearing way; but I answered politely, and (so far as I knew) truthfully, "Chrysanthemum all right."

Knowing that there was no explaining things to Gilray, I redoubled my exertions to water his flower-pot as the day for his return drew near. Once, indeed, when I rang for water, I could not for the life of me remember what I wanted it for when it was brought. Had I had any forethought I should have let the tumbler stand just as it was to show it to Gilray on his return. But, unfortunately, William John had misunderstood what I wanted the water for, and put a decanter down beside it. Another time, I was actually on the stair, rushing to Gilray's door, when I met the housekeeper, and stopping to talk to her, lost my opportunity again. To show how honestly anxious I was to fulfil my promise, I need only add that I was several times awakened in the watches of the night by a haunting consciousness that I had forgotten to water Gilray's flower-pot. On these occasions I spared no trouble to remember again in the morning. I reached out of bed to a chair and turned it upside down, so that the sight of it when I rose might remind me

that I had something to do. With the same object I crossed the tongs and poker on the floor. Gilray maintains that instead of playing "fool's tricks" like these ("fool's tricks!") I should have got up and gone at once to his rooms with my water-bottle. What! and disturbed my neighbours? Besides, could I reasonably be expected to risk catching my death of cold for the sake of a wretched chrysanthemum? One reads of men doing such things for young ladies who seek lilies in dangerous ponds, or edelweiss on overhanging cliffs. But Gilray was not my sweetheart, nor, I feel certain, any other person's.

I now come to the day prior to Gilray's return. I had just reached the office when I remembered about the chrysanthemum. It was my last chance. If I watered it once I should be in a position to state that, whatever condition it might be in, I had certainly been watering it. I jumped into a hansom, told the caddy to drive to the Inn, and twenty minutes afterwards had one hand on Gilray's door, while the other held the largest water-can in the house. Opening the door, I rushed in. The can nearly fell from my hand. There was no flower-pot. I rang the bell. "Mr. Gilray's chrysanthemum!" I cried. What do you think William John said? He coolly told me that the plant was dead, and had been flung out days ago. I went to the theatre that night to keep myself from thinking. All the next day I contrived to remain out of Gilray's sight. When we met he was stiff and polite. He did not say a word about the chrysanthemum for a week, and then it all came out with a rush. I let him talk. With the servants flinging out the flower-pots faster than I could water them, what more could I have done? A coolness between us was inevitable. This I regretted, but my mind was made up on one point: I would never do Gilray a favour again.

J. M. BARRIE.

From "*My Lady Nicotine*."

By permission of the Author.

THE FIREMAN'S LOVE.

Oh no, sir, she's not my own youngster, that golden-haired lassie of five,
But I think I may say that I love her more 'an anything else that's alive.
Got a story? Law bless yer, *she's* got one—she's mine through a saddish mishap;
And it's funny to find us together, for I'm not a marrying chap.
Yer see I'd a pal named Jim Dawson—he was one of this 'ere brigade—
Ah, he was a mate if you like, sir, as true and as good as they're made.

We was chums and fast friends, and there's nothing as ever our friendship once shook;

I think we was summ't like David and Jonathan, sir, in "The Book."

Time passed, and he got a young woman, a straight, nice, fresh-coloured young lass,

But she was a cut above him—belonged to a hupperer class.

Still he loved her, and she loved him, leastways, of course she must surely have done,

For there can't be a woman is living as wouldn't have loved such a one.

Her folks didn't like it a bit, though—they thought it a biggish come down

For their girl to take up with a fireman, as was nothing at all in the town;

And so when a chap all palaver, a gent who could argue and chouse,

Somehow got the blind side the mother—and she, mind, was boss of that house—

Why what could a girl do agin' 'em, when father and mother agreed?

Although 'twas the shamefullest business, on my life, sir, as I ever seed;

For it was the brass as he wanted—Well—I should 'er "gone" straight for him;

However, one day she was married, and the bridegroom, sir—wasn't poor Jim.

He didn't say much at the time, though I saw and I knew what he felt,

For he grew far-away-like and silent, and he'd put on his helmet and belt

At times like as if he warn't with us, and didn't hear naught as was said—

I mean as to chaffin' and jokin'—but for dooty, he was on it, sir—dead.

He came to me cryin' one mornin', and let out a lot of his grief,

Told me all about her, how she'd married a brute of a bully and thief.

He'd just then been lagged, had the husband, and he'd cleaned out her father, the cur;

And although he daint tell me this, sir, I *know* that Jim's wages kept *her*.

And there was a child by the marriage, a girl just about a year old—

That's the one, sir, a-nussin' the dolly, with the curls there a-shinin' like gold.

Well, one day came a call—we were out and away in a twink—the old style,

And before you could tighten a buckle we'd done a good couple of mile;

Jim was standin' right up on the engine—I can see him quite plain, it seems now—

With the look as I spoke of that fixed yer, and held yer, you couldn't tell how.

On a sudden he yelled like a luney, and his face seemed with fury a-flame:

"It's the street where she lives, true as Heaven—by God, too, the house is the same!"

A scramble—a rush—and a scurry; a cheer from the crowd, and a jerk;
 Smoke—flames, and a sea of white faces—and the boys are all down and at work.
 The clank and the thud of the engine, the hiss of the water and fire,
 The glare still grows brighter and brighter, and the flame-tongues lick higher and higher.
 "There's a woman and child in an attic!"—from the yard at the back comes a shout—
 "Oh save them, and don't lose a moment, for the house must be almost burnt out!"
 I was there like a shot, you can bet, sir—we'd worked the escape from the street,
 And cleared out the building, as we thought—but there, at the back, we were beat;
 For there at the top-attic window stood the girl Jim had lost soon as won,
 And there was that yellow-haired babby, just a-clappin' her hands at the fun.
 Just then the fire burst out beneath 'em, and the laugh turned at once to a scream—
 When I *think* of that picture I shudder—now, it seems like an awful bad dream.
 The ladders were too short to reach 'em, besides there was fire all below—
 It was death to attempt at a rescue—we men stood like struck with a blow;
 We was taken aback and quite dazed like, with a feeling as if we should choke,
 And then came again a great quiet, broke by fire-cracks an' rushings of smoke;
 Then a wail like an animal wounded, and a cry came despairing and wild,
 "Can no one come up here and help us? If you cannot save me, save my child!"
 There are times when a man's heart stands still, sir, and the blood seems a-bursting his head,
 That was just how I felt standing helpless—no more good there than if I was dead;
 Then I made a mad rush for a ladder, and I struggled and yelled as if cracked—
 If the boys hadn't held on like demons, I'd been burnt to a coke—that's a fact.
 The smoke in black bundles came rolling, with flame-forks a-darting all through,
 And still you could hear that voice crying, and the screams of the baby-girl too.
 They was hid—and now seen—when that minute such a cheer went up straight from the crowd—
 I don't think the Archangel's trumpet will, to me, be as welcome and loud;
 For there on the roof was Jim Dawson a-scrambling right over the place
 Where the mother and child was a-standing, with again that rum look on his face!
 On he came, slippin' down to the spouting, clawing on to the tiles like a cat;
 Then he lay at full length in the gutter, and stretched out his arm for the brat.

The flames blew aside for one instant, and we saw he'd the child in his grip.
 But how he get back to the roof-top, I never could tell, with no slip.
 A roar, then a still as was death-like, as again he came down to the spout,
 And lay once again on his face, sir, and stretched forth his arm right straight out.
 Like a man as is drowning, she caught at his strong loving hand in despair—
 "He has got her!"—"Good heavens! he's slipping!" For a moment he hung in the air—
 Then, thud! he came down on the pavement—miss'd the tarpaulin just by a shave,
 And she—fell back again in the window; the fire was her end and her grave.
 As he was, burnt and broken, we took him right off to the 'ospital nigh;
 But I knew when I looked in his face, sir, he was only took there just to die.
 * * * * *
 And he died in my arms saying, "Annie!" and he smiled like he'd used to at me.
 The girl as he loved was named Annie—it's the name of that youngster yer see.

JAMES J. BLOOD.

By permission of the Author.

TO MY NEIGHBOUR'S DOG.

O! SILENCE that eternal clamour
 Which vexes so the Poet's soul,
 Beats in his brain like ringing hammer
 Thy loud discordant *barcarolle*.
 With wails, "bow-wows!" and "woofs!" and howlings
 No rest our nerves or echoes know;
 Of snarlings, yelpings gruntings, growlings,
 "Man wants but little here below."
 The slightest thing—a chirping sparrow—
 Can make thee give Cerberian tongue
 To sounds which pierce my very marrow.
 Thou art the noisiest tyke unhung!
 How can I write a pleasant story,
 Or touch the soft poetic lute?
 O, for a dagger, sharp and gory,
 With "rift" to "make *thy* music mute!"
 I've stuffed my ears with wool of cotton,
 I've wrapp'd my head in thickest shawl,
 But no!—unceasing—unforgotten,
 Thy voice can penetrate through all.
 I scarce can see thee in that garden;
 Thy kennel lies beyond my ken,

But oh!—I *hear* enough to harden
My heart against both dogs and men.

I've written letters to thy master,
Complaining, threatening, but in vain;
I wish some nautical disaster
Would drown thy bark beneath the main.

Whether in anger, grief, or larking,
Thy notes are harsh as croaking frogs;
Would I could banish thee to Barking,
Or chain thee to the Isle of Dogs.

I'd like to launch the deadly lasso,
And lynch thee up to yonder tree;
Then never more thy blatant basso
Could torture me to this degree.

I'll give some ragged boy a shilling
To drug thee dead with poison'd meat,
Thou "Barkis," who is always "willing"
To "murder sleep" in my retreat.

Yes, show thy teeth, thou canine Carker,
A pistol, which, in burglar slang,
Is call'd a "bull-dog," or a "barker,"
Would fity end thee with a bang.

Thy war-whoop rouses fierce Bellona
With "dogs of war" within my breast;
Take that!—there! now I've thrown a *stone*, ah!
Die, dread disturber of my rest!

Bang! crash! with loud and startling *sound*, it
Just misses him!—a lost endeavour;
I've smash'd two panes of glass, confound it!
And Snarlo's barking worse than ever!

WALTER PARKE.

By permission of the Author.

THE ABBOT'S CURSE.

UPON the sunny plains of Ardres the tourney lists
were set,
Where the Tudor and the Valois in gay alliance
met;
Where the ruddy Lion ramped upon his standard's
massy fold,
And the Lilies flaunted freely o'er the Field of Cloth
of Gold.

The trumpets rang their challenge; straight for
England and for France
Two tried and trusty champions stood forth to
break a lance;
The Kings enthroned above them looked proudly
on the two,
Who stood there in their harness, their knightly
task to do.

King Francis smiled his royal smile, and gave his
royal hand,
As bending to his charger's mane De Biron took
his stand;
Said King Harry to Ralph Assheton, "Strike hard
in England's name!
Then ask the victor's boon of me, I will not baulk
thy claim!"

'Mid roll of drum and clash of steel the trumpets
pealed "Advance!"
And brave De Biron bit the dust before the Asshe-
ton's lance;
The English cheer rose merrily; for their warrior
good at need,
As lowly at his sovereign's knee he bent his boon
to plead.

"A royal grace I ask, my liege: give me the broad
Church lands
Where, under Pendle's lofty crest, old Whalley's
tower stands:
Where the Hodder and the Ribble crisp to the
moorland breeze,
And the Abbot looks from Whalley Head, the lord
of all he sees."

King Harry laughed a jovial laugh, "Well does
the proverb say—
'He who would 'ware the Assheton grip, must give
the Assheton way.'
Go, take thy state at Whalley, and, the cowls all
driven forth,
I'll pledge thee in their sack when next I see my
gallant North."

With parchment and with mandate, all in King
Henry's name,
With riders fierce to back him, to Whalley Assheton
came,
Where proud in robe and mitre, beneath the Holy
Rood,
The sacrilegious robber the dauntless priest with-
stood.

But what could ban or courage do, or faith in force
Divine,
When strong hands burst the sacred doors and
swept away the shrine?
Before the flush of sunset died upon the Ribble's
breast,
They hanged the fearless Abbot on Whalley's lofty
crest.

But, as they bore him to his fate, beneath the quiet
skies,
He turned and looked, in solemn wrath, straight
in Ralph Assheton's eyes.
"Thou hast thy will, oh, man of blood! I neither
plead nor pray,
But I call on earth and heaven to witness what I
say.

"I shall lie beneath the cold grey stone, in yon
holy house of prayer,
And thou and thine wilt rule the vale I found and
kept so fair;
But, so sure as kith and kin of thine seek fair St.
Mary's shrine,
They die, who dare in pride of place to tread that
rest of mine!

"And, by the God who judges 'twixt thee and me
to-night,
His wrath, before the year is out, thy haughty
head shall smite;
Thou canst drag me to my martyrdom, canst stop
this passing breath:
Thou canst not stay this curse of mine—I doom
thee in my death!"

The thunder-clouds were resting on Pendle like a
frown,
When o'er the Abbot's slaughter May skies looked
darkly down.
'Twas 'mid the July roses, that in baronial pride
Ralph Assheton led to Whalley Church a fair and
happy bride.

Swift, with the reckless stride of one who feared
nor man nor God,
O'er the stone that marked his victim's rest, up to
the shrine he trod;
When the winter snows were lying on moorland,
glen, and plain,
From Whalley's stately portals passed Ralph
Assheton's funeral train.

Over the hills of Lancashire three hundred years
have flown,
And the Abbot's titles moulder fast on his memorial
stone;
But still the curse he spoke of old its mystic power
keeps,
And still an Assheton shrinks to pass where in
the aisle he sleeps.

The Hodder and the Ribble run glittering to the
sea;
Green grows the turf at Whalley, her woods wave
fair and free;
The grey old church stands steadfastly by Pendle's
lofty head,
And the legend of the Asshetons broods ever o'er
dead.

SUSAN 'K. PHILLIPS.

By permission of the Author.

BREAKING IN A BICYCLE.

I KNOW no newly acquired art that gives a person such a feeling of exhilaration as the balancing oneself on a spidery bicycle, and flying through the air on the top of it, at ever so many miles an hour. I suppose that when man first masters the science of flying he will feel something as a person does in the earlier days of his bicycle riding. The wheel runs along a smooth road requiring such little exertion to propel it, that it is no wonder one feels as if the gods had bestowed new powers upon him. All the ills of life fade away for the time being and become trivial.

Never shall I forget my amazement when I saw a human being for the first time on one of those wheels which we now call the ordinary bicycle. It seemed to me then anything but ordinary. In due time I tackled one of these machines at a riding-school. The result was that in a certain number of rounds the machine floored me every time, drawing first, second, and third blood. As I had some work to do in this world I abandoned the attempt, not wishing to break myself into little pieces. On various occasions since then I have endeavoured to train up a bicycle in the way it should go, and always without success.

But one day a friend of mine told me that the real way to acquire the bicycle habit was to get a machine of my own.

"As long," said he "as you simply depend on hired machines you won't learn, because you have nothing at stake; but once you spend good money for a first-class bicycle you are then compelled to learn, or else there is so much cash thrown away."

This seemed very reasonable, so I pondered upon it, and then bought the biggest book on cycling that is published; a very expensive book, one of the volumes of the Badminton Library, edited by a real lord, and illustrated by a prince—a prince of the brush—named Joseph Pennell, who is a cyclist himself, and he draws very alluring pictures of the machine. I studied up this volume and was amazed to see how easy it was to ride a bicycle. I then took the advice of the book as to which particular machine to buy. It gives several pages to a description of the Rover safety, invented by Mr. J. K. Starley, and I learned that that machine had none of the vices which were so prominent in those bicycles with which I had been heretofore brought into contact. On the Rover it was impossible to take a header. The machine also would not slip sideways in the mud. It has numerous other advantages, for a list of which I refer all inquirers to the cycling volume of the Badminton Library.

So I had a Rover made to measure—for they measure you for a bicycle just as if you were getting a pair of trousers made—and the other day the machine was delivered in good shape wrapped up in brown paper.

At the back part of my house there is a some-

what large lawn that costs me ever so much a year for having a lazy man with a lawn-mower go over it two or three times a month. I thought I would make things interesting for this man the next time he came with his lawn-mower by practising over the grass with my new bicycle.

The machine was a beautiful one, nickel-plated everywhere that nickel would stick on it, and so light that you could easily pick it up in one hand, grasping it by the backbone. It seemed almost too pretty for a rough-and-tumble fight, even on the velvety lawn, and I had some thought of putting it back in its brown paper again and hiring a second-hand machine to learn on; but as the Rover was guaranteed to hang together under almost any circumstances I concluded to go ahead with it. I put my left foot on the step that extends out from the hub of the hind wheel, and hopping with my right foot, pushed it ahead of me. The machine behaved beautifully, but perhaps that was because I hopped the whole length of the lawn, and had not the courage to jump up into the saddle. On the next round my natural bravery returned to me, and I raised myself above the machine and sat down somewhat emphatically and not too comfortably. The Rover seemed to be amazed at this, for with a large space of lawn to wander over, it promptly dashed over the border to the left, then with a wild swoop to the right, fell and landed me in a rose-bush. Nothing seemed to be broken except the bush, so I tackled it again and again and again. The result of the first morning's work was that I could place myself in the saddle and trundle along the lawn, hanging on like grim death to the handle bar, but without daring to put my feet on the pedals.

I discovered more different muscles in my own body than I had any idea I possessed. Every bone and sinew ached, not with the falls, for I had been singularly lucky in that respect, but with the exertion of hopping along after the machine, and springing into the saddle and straining every nerve to keep the combination from going over.

Not to make too long a story of it, I may say that for three days the machine and I discussed this matter; and every morning when I led it out on to the lawn I seemed at first to know less about balancing myself than I had done when I quitted the business the day before. Perhaps during the night the machine had thought up some new tricks.

At last I rose up very early one morning, long before the season-ticket man began to pass my house to go to the railway station for his London train. I felt that the lawn was getting too small for me. I could now work the pedals reasonably well, and stagger about the place from one end to the other of the grass-plot, but I could not turn around; for when I attempted to do so the machine would swoop like a hawk into one of the flower-beds or into a convenient piece of shrubbery.

Our neighbourhood is a quiet one, and the street, at most times, is not quite so busy as the Strand. I expected to have it all to my-self in the early morning out, but in this I reckoned without the milkman. I had no idea before that the matutinal milkman was such a fiend in human shape. He drives a vehicle modelled after the old Roman chariots, and he drives at a rate of speed that is something appalling. The moment I got on my bicycle in the road some accursed milkman would come tearing up, and taking it for granted that I knew all about bicycle steering, he never paid the slightest attention to me. Consequently I came within an ace of being smashed up into pieces on several occasions; and after steering my machine up on the sidewalk and into the fence to get out of his way, I used language that I knew must have turned most of the milk in that neighbourhood sour.

One morning, thoroughly discouraged with the business, I got out on the street a little later than usual, so as to be rid of the milkman. One peculiarity of a bicycle seems to be that, although you are reasonably successful on your last interview with it, the next you seem to have to begin all over again. This particular morning I was more than usually discouraged, and had practically made up my mind to sell the machine. All at once I found myself in the saddle, and realised that I had run along several rods without any serious wobbling. On and on and on we went with a beautiful sense of smoothness, ease and exhilaration. I turned in to the main coaching road with my heart in my mouth, but my feet still on the pedals, and I executed a turn without disaster. There was now a straight stretch ahead of me for miles on a smooth and excellent road.

"Surely," said I to myself, "the time is come when my neck is to be broken. This docility on the part of the Rover can lead to nothing but disaster." Nevertheless, on and on we went, and after travelling for about a mile and coming to a wide part in the thoroughfare, I took a sweep around with amazing success, and travelled back again. It seemed to be an unbelievable thing, but actually I had succeeded in teaching that bicycle how to carry a man as a man should be carried.

After this I thought, that before taking a journey from Land's End to John o' Groat's house, it would be just as well if I learned how to get off the machine in a less wholesale manner than I had been in the habit of doing. It is a very simple thing to get off a machine as an expert bicyclist does it. I suppose each man has his own particular way of descending, but the friend who taught me allowed the left pedal to reach its lowest point, and then airily flung his right leg over the hind wheel and so lightly down to the ground. It is not so simple as it seems. I found that, without any extraordinary effort on my part, it was quite possible for my right heel to catch somewhere in

the hind wheel or the saddle, and while it is true I got off, the machine always came down on top of me. However, I soon learned the trick and felt once more that I owned the earth.

The next point was turning round. Even at the moment of writing I cannot say much about this and will not venture to instruct my fellows, because it is an art which I have not yet mastered. My Rover will go beautifully in a straight line, but it betrays too great an eagerness to suit me in turning round. It seems to want to do it in a swoop and trying to accomplish too much in a restricted space and a given limited portion of time; we invariably come down together in company. I hope to master this feat before proceeding to write a book of instruction for would-be bicyclers.

The other morning Fate followed me in a curious way, but in a shape in which it has followed many a man before, and will doubtless do again. Fate assumed the shape of a woman, and she sat in a little cart pulled by a silly, diminutive pony, whose small, quick hoofs went patter, patter, on the hard road. I resolved to go in a quiet Surrey lane that led into the country for some miles, and was out of the reach even of suburban London. This is a beautiful lane, reasonably level, winding narrowly between hedges and fine tall trees. It was a favourite walk of mine before I took to bicycling, and in the spring of the year, with the lark singing high above, and the less exalted birds melodious in the trees and hedges, it is a lane of comfort and joy. I had hardly met anybody in this lane, and so it struck me as a good place in which to practise, free from the admiring gaze of the suburban resident.

When I started out for this secluded thoroughfare I heard behind me the patter, patter, patter of the idiotic hoofs of that pony. I dared not turn round my head to see how close it was, and so resolved to put on a burst of speed, and get away from it. The swiftness with which I went also filled me with fear, for if I happened to meet anything I felt sure I would run directly into it. In spite of my hurry the fiendish driver seemed bent upon keeping up with me, and the patter, patter, patter sounded as distinctly as ever. I felt I had not quite knowledge enough yet of the art of cycling to run a race with even the most insignificant pony on these islands, so I slowed up and, with my heart in my mouth, endeavoured to do the getting off trick, which I had so successfully accomplished in my own back-yard. Alas! I forgot the combination and came down with a clattering smash right across the road. The woman pulled in the pony and was kind enough not to run over the bicycle and myself.

I limped with the machine to the side of the road and let her go past. I suppose the woman had just as much right on that road as I had, but that was no particular consolation to me.

I did not get on the machine again, but walked beside it along a foot-path that cut across a corner

and got quickly into the quiet lane. There was, as I expected, nobody in sight. I was somewhat shocked to find the lane rather narrower than it had seemed to be when I walked along it, and I never noticed before how deep the ditch was on each side under the hedges. There would be no room for wobbling. However, the road was clear and that was one consolation.

I mounted on the Rover and away we went. Would you believe that I had hardly gone a quarter of a mile when I heard behind me the patter, patter, patter of those diabolical hoofs? And it was evident that that pony was gaining upon me, and that the woman was driving up with the mercilessness that a woman nearly always uses towards any animal of an equine nature. I felt sure that if I let her pass me she would be certain to take some turning and get behind me again within a few minutes. I put on my best licks of speed and turning a corner, saw to my disquietude, a meditative man with his hands behind him, walking right in the middle of the road, some distance ahead of me. This, with the patter behind me, completed my discomfiture. I glanced over my shoulder to see how close that wretched pony was, and what happened next I can't exactly remember. The machine seemed to jump from the middle of the road right down into the middle of the ditch, and my head and shoulders were instantly half-way through one of the prickliest hedges that it has ever been my ill luck to encounter. The horrified woman pulled up her pony, and asked anxiously if I was hurt.

"Oh, no," I said, "I am merely doing this for amusement. Please drive on and put that little pony safely in some stable with a lock on it."

The woman seemed offended and drove on.

I painfully extracted myself from the hedge, and expected once more to find my bicycle in pieces. Why I did not break its backbone as I came down into that ditch I don't know, because I am anything but a light weight. I was covered with scratches and the bicycle was covered with mud. I got painfully out and pulled the bicycle up to the side of the road, where we sat down together and consoled with each other.

I scraped the mud off the machine as well as I could, and patched up my own bruises and once more got on the Rover and now, with no pony to molest me or make me afraid, started down the lane.

At another turning I came upon the meditative man in the middle of the road, still slowly progressing with his back towards me. I had forgotten all about him. I rang the warning-bell, and glancing over his shoulder, he stepped aside and left me practically the whole lane to pass upon. I was very much afraid there would not be room enough, and my fears were only too well realized. Coming up alongside of him the machine, with that touch of the devil which every bicycle has, gave a wild

swoop' right down on him, and I came within an inch of taking the man's nose off.

He sprang back in alarm, and I just missed going into the ditch first on one side and then on the other. He evidently thought I did it on purpose, for he shook his fist in the air and cursed loudly.

"I have given you the whole road," he cried, "and yet you must try your tricks on me, you scoundrel."

I dared not trust myself in trying to get off and apologize to him, so I paddled on silently ahead until I was out of the sound of his voice; and I have no doubt that he wrote a letter to the papers showing what demons bicyclists are.

This is a faithful record of my expertness on a pneumatic-tyred Rover of the 1895 pattern up to date.

ROBERT BARR.

By permission of the Author.

DON'T CEÄRE.

(Dorsetshire Dialect.)

At the feüst, I do mind very well all the vo'ks

Wer a-took in a happeren storm,
But we chaps took the maidens, an' kept 'em wi' clokes

Under shelter, all dry an' all warm;
An' to my lot vell Jeâne, that's my bride,
That did titter, a-hung at my zide;
Zaid her aunt, "Why the vo'k 'ull talk finely o' you,"

An' cried she, "I don't ceäre if they do."

When the time o' the feüst wer ageün a-come round,

An' the vo'k wer a-gather'd woonce mwore,
Why she guess'd if she went there, she'd soon be a-round

An' a-took seäfelý hwome to her door.
Zaid her mother, "'Tis sure to be wet."
Zaid her cousin, "'Tull rain by zunzet."
Zaid her aunt, "Why the clouds there do look black an' blue,"

An' zaid she, "I don't ceäre if they do."

An', at last, when she own'd I mid meäke her my bride,

Vor to help me, an' sheäre all my lot,
An' wi' faithfulness keep all her life at my zide,

Though my way mid be happy or not.
Zaid her neighbour, "Why wedlock's a clog,
An' a wife's a-tied up lik' a dog."
Zaid her aunt, "You'll vind trials enough vor to rue,"

An' zaid she, "I don't ceäre if I do."

Now she's married, an' still in the midst ov her twails

She's as happy's the daylight is Jong,
She do goo out abroad wi' her feäce vull o' smiles,
An' do work in the house wi' a zong.
An', zays woone, "She don't grieve, you can tell."
Zays another, "Why, don't she look well!"
Zays her aunt, "Why the young vo'k do envy you two,"
An', zays she, "I don't ceäre if they do."

Now vor me I can zing in my business abroad,

Though the storm do beat down on my poll,
There's a wife-brighten'd vier at the end o' my road,
An' her love vor the jaý o' my soul.
Out o' door I wi' rogues mid be tried:
Out o' door be brow-beaten wi' pride;
Men mid scowl out o'door, if my wife is but true—
Let 'em scowl, "I don't ceäre if they do."

REV. WILLIAM BARNES.

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THE PRIEST'S LEAP.

A Legend of the Penal Times.

THE priest is out upon the hill before the dawn of day,

Through shadows deep, o'er rugged ground, he treads his painful way;

A peasant's homely garb he wears, that none but friendly eyes

May know who dares to walk abroad beneath that rough disguise.

Inside his coat and near his heart lies what he treasures most,

For there a tiny silver case enshrines the Sacred Host.

Adoring as he goes, he seeks a cabin low and rude,
To nourish there a fainting soul with God's appointed food—

For so it is within the land whose brave and faithful race

In other days made all the isle a bright and holy place,

Its temples are in ruins now, its altars overthrown,
Its hermits' cells in cliff and cave are tenantless and lone;

The ancient race are broken down, their power is passed away,

Poor helots, plundered and despised, they tread the soil to-day.

But yet; though fallen their fortunes be, through want, and woe, and ill,

Close hid, and fondly loved, they keep their priests amongst them still—

Their faithful priests, who, though by law condemned, denounced, and banned,
Will not forsake their suffering flocks, or quit the stricken land.

The morning brightens as he goes, the little hut is near,

When runs a peasant to his side, and speaks into his ear:

"Fly, father, fly; the spies are out; they've watched you on your way;

They've brought the soldiers on your track, to seize you or to slay!

Quick, father dear! here stands my horse; no whip or spur he'll need;

Mount you at once upon his back, and put him to his speed;

And then what course you'd better take 'tis God alone that knows.

Before you spreads a stormy sea, behind you come your foes:

But mount at once and dash away; take chance for field or flood,

And God may raise his hand to-day to foil those men of blood!"

Up sprang the priest, away he rode, but ere a mile was run,

Right in his path he saw the flash of bayonets in the sun;

He turned his horse's head, and sped along the way he came,

But oh! there too his hunters fast were closing on their game!

Straight forward then he faced his steed, and urged him with his hand,

To where the cliff stood high and sheer above the sea-beat strand.

Then from the soldiers and the spies arose a joyful cheer,

Their toilsome chase was well-nigh o'er, the wished-for end was near:

They stretched their eager hands to pluck the rider from his seat—

A few more lusty strides and they might swing him to their feet;

For now betwixt him and the verge, are scarce ten feet of ground—

But, stay! Good God! out o'er the cliff the horse is seen to bound!

The soldiers hasten to the spot, they gaze around, below—

No splash disturbs the waves that keep their smooth and even flow,

From their green depths no form of man or horse is seen to rise,

Far down upon the stormy strand no mangled body lies:

"Look up! look up!" a soldier shouts, "Oh, what a sight is there!

Behold, the priest, on horseback still, is speeding through the air;"

They looked, and lo! the words were true; and trembling with affright,

They saw the vision pierce the blue and vanish from their sight.

Three miles away across the bay a group with wondering eyes

Saw some strange speck come rushing fast towards them from the skies.

A bird they deemed it first to be; they watched its course, and soon

They thought it some black burning mass flung from the sun or moon;

It neared the earth—their hearts beat fast—they held their breath with awe,

As clear, and clearer still—the horse—and then the man they saw!

They shut their eyes, they stopped their ears, to spare their hearts the shock

As steed and rider both came down and struck the solid rock!

Ay, on the solid rock they struck, but never made a sound;

No horrid mass of flesh and blood was scattered all around;

For when the horse fell on his knees, and when the priest was thrown

A little forward, and his hands came down upon the stone,

That instant, by God's potent will, the flinty rock became

Like moistened clay, or wax that yields before a glowing flame.

Unhurt, unharmed, the priest arose, and with a joyful start,

He pressed his hand upon his breast—the Host was near his heart.

Long years have passed away since then, in sunshine, wind, and rain,

But still of that terrific leap the wondrous marks remain;

On the high cliff from which he sprang, now deemed a sacred place,

The prints left by the horse's hoofs are plain for all to trace,

And still the stone where he alit whoever likes may view,

And see the signs and tokens there that prove the story true;

May feel and count each notch and line, may measure, if he please,

The dint made by the horse's head, the grooves sunk by his knees,

And place his fingers in the holes—for there they are to-day—

Made by the fingers of the priest who leaped across the bay.

T. D. SULLIVAN.

By permission of the Author.

A TERRIBLE ENCOUNTER WITH A SNAKE.

My wife had made me a present of a superb walking-stick. This walking-stick was a combination of strength and elegance. It was handsome enough to figure at a church parade in Hyde Park, and strong enough to fell an ox with.

In my peregrinations through the Bush of Australia, this stick was always with me. It was a stout support and a weapon of defence in case of need. If ever a snake had confronted me, I leave you to guess the reception he would have got. Talk about mincemeat!—well, never mind, I won't brag!

I have a perfect horror of snakes—those pests of Central Australia—and so, as soon as I had arrived in the country, I made every inquiry as to the best methods of protecting oneself against the dangerous reptiles.

"Cover your legs with leather gaiters," I was told, "and then, with a good tough stick in your hand, you need have no fear."

Thereupon I was enlightened as to the infallible manner of slaying the enemy without the slightest danger to the slayer.

"Avoid placing yourself behind or in front of your snake—behind especially—but take it side on, grip your stick hard, and bring it down on its back with all your might: Bang!—there you are; you have broken its slippery spinal column, and your snake is soon as dead as a door-nail."

Over and over again people said to me, "Surely you will not return to Europe without being able to say to your compatriots, 'I killed a serpent' in Australia, and this is how it was done!" Every Frenchman who has travelled in far countries is supposed to be more or less tinged with *tar-tarinade*.

All that is very well; but I am a prudent man, and I said to myself, "Instead of a Frenchman telling his fellow-countrymen how to kill a snake, it might just as likely end in a snake telling its friends and family how to polish off a Frenchman." That would never do at all.

However, when I was in the Bush, wandering about armed with that new stout walking-stick, I went through the rôle that I might be called upon to enact at any moment, and I killed them by hundreds—the snakes that were not there. Not one escaped alive. Just a tremendous whack, and the thing was done exactly as my friends had told me: "Bang!—there you are."

In the case of two enemies, the one who is first discovered by the other is half beaten. And so the snake I feared especially was the one hidden in the grass or the dead wood with which the Bush is strewn, and which, being walked upon, has a way of entering an energetic protest in the form of a bite on your calf, before you have time to know where you are.

But the snake that I dreaded most of all was the one which insinuates itself at evening into people's houses, glides into a bedroom, and quietly curls up in the bed.

A snake will never attack you unless you tread on it, or put yourself in the path to its hole; and if, ever you find one in your bed, do not disturb it, and it will not disturb you. This is the kind of thing I was told by every one who had had any sort of acquaintance with snakes; but in spite of all that, I remained convinced that if ever I, a full-grown man, found a snake in my bed, I should scream like any of Miss Tomkin's schoolgirls.

I arrived one evening in a town situated in the interior of New South Wales. The season was what the inhabitants of those parts called spring; one hundred and five degrees of heat at midday, and ninety at nine in the evening—regular snake weather. Not a leaf stirred; one could scarcely breathe in the leaden atmosphere; the little town was right in the Bush. Behind the hotel where I had alighted ran a small river, that furnished the establishment with mosquitoes of an energy and voracity beyond competition. The cookery in that hotel was atrocious. Like poor dead Polonius, we, the guests, were at a feast—not where we ate but where we were eaten. Before retiring to rest on the first night, I had a chat with the landlord, who informed me that the district was infested with snakes. The close vicinity of the Bush and of the river, added to the intense heat, naturally rendered the town a likely resort for snakes. That very afternoon my host had killed one, measuring eight feet, in one of his flower-beds. "And," he said, "the plague of it is, that the brutes are constantly getting into the house and hiding in the bedrooms."

For an hour we talked snakes. It was enough to fill my dreams with the most horrid, tortuous nightmares. When I left him for the night, I was careful to bear in mind his last words: "I always recommend travellers to look well into the corners of their rooms, and to close their windows before getting into bed."

You may imagine whether I searched my room in every part; in the corners and under the furniture, but above all, under the bed and in the bed. I carefully prodded, with that good stick of mine, the bed-coverings and the pillows. I do believe, upon my word, I searched the inside of the chest of drawers.

No snakes anywhere.

Quite reassured, I closed the window, undressed, put out the light, and got into bed.

The heat was stifling, perfectly sickening.

Presently some mosquitoes began to buzz around my head, intoning the battle-cry that heralds a combat without quarter. There were curtains, but with holes in them; worse than none. It is generally so in Australian hotels. The consequence is that when the beast is inside he cannot get out.

A duel à mort. You or he must die. That buzz of the mosquitoes is as irritating as the whizzing of bullets on the battle-field, but with this difference, however, that the ball which has just gone singing past you has gone for ever, while the buzz of the mosquito announces that the danger is very present and battle is about to begin.

As a protection for my head, and at the risk of suffocation, I drew the sheet over my face, and then, bathed in perspiration and breathing with difficulty, I tried to forget in sleep real mosquitoes and imaginary snakes.

I believe I slept for a few minutes. The heat was such that I felt as if I were burning and panting in a boiling-water bath. It was impossible to endure it longer, so I resolved to give my hands and arms over to the mosquitoes. Keeping the sheet over my face, I put my arms outside and laid my hands on the quilt.

No, really, I am not more of a coward than you, gallant reader, but then and there my blood froze in my veins. I had laid my hand down on a snake that was stretched out beside me on the bed! I had almost grasped it, indeed. Yes, a snake, a real, long, round snake, cold and immobile as death.

Snakes are heavy sleepers, and this slept profoundly. It was perfectly still. Gently I drew my hand in under the sheet again.

I repeat, I am no more of a coward than you; neither am I more brave. But if I found myself face to face with a lion, and I had a good gun in hand, I am perfectly convinced that I would have the necessary *sang froid* to send him a well-directed bullet before giving him the time to help himself to a slice of my anatomy. But a snake in the blackness of night there beside me, and I lying unarmed, defenceless, without protection of any kind, and next to naked. The situation appeared desperate, horrible.

I have always had a horror of all crawling things, especially of cold and damp ones. I never could touch a fish even. If I had been the first man, the human race would have been spared a great deal, for I could never have eaten an apple in the company of a serpent, even if it had been shared by the loveliest woman in the world. I would rather meet a ravening wolf at the corner of a wood, than know that there was hiding in my bedroom a centipede, a scorpion, a fat spider, or even an inoffensive black beetle. A lizard would make me take to my heels.

A snake, just fancy!

A cold perspiration broke out all over me. I was glued to the bed, paralysed with fright.

What was to be done?

Get up and fly? Yes, no doubt; but what if I woke it up and it nailed me to the door? To lie still and wait for daylight appeared to be the wisest thing to do after all. Yes, much the wisest. But alas! it could scarcely be midnight yet, and never, never should I be able to endure that living nightmare for seven mortal hours.

The snake moved not a muscle, neither did I. What seemed strange to me was that this snake slept stretched out straight, instead of being curled up, as his species generally are in repose. By means of an imperceptible movement of my knees, I came to the conclusion that it must be about three feet long. This is the length of the terrible death-adder. It made my poor brain reel to think that the horrid brute was there ready to give me my death when it should wake up.

Another plan suggested itself: roll the quilt very softly, and, wrapping it over the creature, strangle it. Yes, yes; but the room was in dense darkness, and I should be running a great risk. It might wriggle deftly from my grasp, and dart its poisoned fangs into my arm.

No; some other plan; but first and foremost a light, a light at any price.

Haunted by visions of Laocoons, father and family, feverish, half crazy, dripping with perspiration, the darkness multiplied my sufferings, and made the situation seem terrible, nay, hopeless.

Then I had a few calm moments—thanks to the idea that death caused by a snake-bite is painless. You go to sleep and do not wake any more, that's all. I thought of Cleopatra. Heigho! far better die like that than of gout or rheumatism.

Stop a moment, though! I had rather not die of that or of anything else to-night. To die a painless death is dying all the same, and I feel so grateful to be alive!

I was going crazy, and I felt that a light was the only thing that could bring back my wits. I would have no more suspense. I would strike a match and have the enemy face to face, or rather on the side, as people had all recommended.

The snake was there on the bed, still immobile, soundly asleep, never dreaming that a man nearly six feet, strong, healthy, and in the prime of life, was trembling at the side of it—a loathsome thing about an inch and a half round and scarcely three feet long.

I put out my right arm and reached the match-box that stood on a table by the bed. This was a little manoeuvre which took quite ten minutes to execute. Without moving, and after frantic precautions, I succeeded in lighting the candle. The light appalled me at first. The snake would certainly wake up, and the duel would begin.

The snake moved not.

I grew emboldened, and went so far as to uncover half my head and steal a glance down the bed. There it was, sure enough, motionless still, and still as straight as a line. I took courage, and, after ten minutes spent in imperceptible efforts, I arrived at the edge of the bed at last, and stealthily vacated it. I was going to look for my trusty walking-stick, resolved to sell my life as dearly as possible. I looked on the mantelpiece, on the chest of drawers, in every corner of the room. No stick. Just my fate again. Where on earth could that stick be?

I turned towards the bed again.
I took up the light, and, feeling now once more
in full possession of my faculties, drew near and
looked at the snake.

Well, well! Is it possible for a man to be such
a fool?

MAX O'RELL.

From "John Bull & Co."

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THE GIRL OF CASTLEBAR.

THE bugle horn was sounding through the streets
of Castlebar,
And many a gallant soldier was bound unto the
war,
And one upon the Staball Hill, his sweetheart by
his side,
Swore many a rounded warlike oath, that she should
be his bride.

"O Maggie!" cried the Corporal, "There's war
across the sea,
And when I'm parted from thee, I would you'd
pray for me,
And I will tell you what you'll do, when I am far
away;
You'll come up to the Staball, and kneel for me,
and pray."

And this to him she promised, and this to him she
said,
"I'll still be ever true to thee, be thou alive or
dead!
I'll still be ever true to thee, and O, if thou dost
fall,
Thy soul at eve will find me here, upon the old
Staball."

And then he swore a clinker oath, of what a venge-
ful doom
Would him befall, who dared to win her from him;
then the bloom
Came to her cheek again. "O Jim, I'll never love
but you."
"I'm blowed but I'm the same!" he cried, and
then they tore in two!

She saw her soldier leaving, she heard the music
sweet,
Of "The Girl I left behind me," soundingsadly up
the street;
She saw the shrieking engine that bore him far
away,
Then went back to the Staball, to weep for him and
pray.

And as the summer faded, and gloaming nights
came round,
A maid anon was kneeling upon that trysting
ground,
And fearless of the winter, and of its falling snow,
That maiden sweet, and constant, unto her tryst
would go.

Till on a certain evening a stranger in the town
Came sauntering up the Staball, and found her
kneeling down;
He tipped her on the shoulder, and speaking soft
and low,
"O what on earth possesses you, to pray upon the
snow?"

She told him all her story then, and why so kneel-
ing there,
She told him of her sorrowed heart, the object of
her prayer,
She told him of her soldier lad, so far across the sea,
"I'd like to be a soldier lad, with you to love!"
said he.

Said he, "You're very lonely: If you have need to
pray,
I'll come aghra! and help you with 'Amens,' if I
may;
It's very hard acushla! to pray alone each night,"
And the colleen shyly answered, "She thought
perhaps he might."

The tryst became more social, for while the colleen
prayed,
The stranger tooted "Amens" unto the kneeling
maid,
Until at last he muttered, "This pantomime must
stop,
I'll buy the ring to-morrow: I've got a watch to
pop!"

At length the war was over, she heard the beaten
drum,
And up again thro' Castlebar the scarlet men did
come;
Her heart grew cold within her, to think how
wroth he'd be
To learn she had been faithless while he was o'er
the sea.

Then pleading to her husband, "O hide yourself!"
she said,
"Aye, even up the chimbley, or undhernate the
bed!"
For if he ketches how'd of you, I don't know what
he'll do,
It's maybe let his gun go off, an' maybe kill the
two!

"I'll try and coax the grannies to break it to him
first,
For if he's towld it sudden by me, 'twill be the
worst;

They'll have to put it softly, I cannot be his bride,
So while I'm gone to tell them, do you run off an' hide."

"O break it to him, Grannies, the shocking news," she said,

"That I have wed another, and him I cannot wed.
O put it to him gently, for great will be his pain,
That we'll never more be meeting on the Staball Hill again."

They broke it to him softly, 'twas in a public bar,
A foaming pint before him, and on his brow a scar;
They broke it to him gently, and spoke it to him plain,
He needn't think to meet her on the Staball Hill again.

He swigged the pint before him, then heaved a bitter sigh,
"What? blow me, you're a-chaffin'!" "O divil a word o' lie!"
Then first he took his shako and tossed it to the roof,
Then to each nervous grannie, "I here take the blooming loof."

"Come, wots yer shout for liquor? It's deuced well!" cried he,
"I'm buckled to a blackmoor, I met beyond the sea;
You've taken a load from off of me! my mind is now at par,
She wouldn't have left a ribbon on the Girl of Castlebar!"

W. THEODORE PARKES.

From "The Spook Ballads."
By permission of the Author.

THAT PROUD YOUNG MAN.

It was a young tourist, the brave and the free—
So loudly, so strongly, so sweetly sang he;
He was dressed, as he should be, in Cheviot check,
And gaily and chirpily roamed he the deck.

From his neck hung his glass, from his chain hung a charm;
A *lorgnette* suspended by strap 'neath his arm;
A shiny-topped straw on the back of his head—
His cheeks, though not pallid, were wanting in red.

His gloves in his pocket he wore on that day,
To give both his hands, if they wanted, fair play;
For the deck seemed to rise up, and then down to sink,
And I saw an old sailor the steward to wink.

But the tourist he laughed in the height of his glee,
And at travellers' tumbles so freely smiled he;
He chaffed poor "Mossoo," as he yellower grew,
And he chaffed at a dame who cried, "Take me down, do!"

And he grinned at a youth who was terribly ill,
And he roared as the boy said, "Oh, keep the boat still!"

And he gave cheery words to the man at the wheel,
And sucked a large lemon quite close to the peel.

And he straight spoke the skipper along o' the weather,
And they stood by the taffrail so cheery together;
And he called all the ailing ones "muffs" and poor sailors,
And declared that the French were no better than tailors.

And he looked o'er the bulwarks so bold and defiant,
And vowed that he felt all the strength of a giant;
And again and again, in the midst of his glee,
He sang out so bravely—so bravely sang he:

"What ho! there for Calais! the ship cleaves the sea,
The paddles beat bravely, the mainsle fills free;
'Tis sweet without sickness the ocean to ride,
And guily—

(Oh steward! your arm to the side.)

"Oh, think not, brave seaman, from foul *mal-de-mer* I suffer!
'Twas nothing; I love the brisk air,
The white-manned sea-horses, the green-heaving tide,

And grey gulls—

(Oh, steward! your arm to the side.)

"'Twas fancy, good fellow! Ye gods, what a joy
Is freedom from sickness! I've conquered, my boy;
I feel, oh! I feel, as I Neptune deride,
So reckless—

(Oh, steward! your arm to the side.)

"Yes, how brisk smells the briny, how soft curls the wave!
What painful sensations long usage can save!
I cross the rough Channel—walk gangways in pride,
And never—

(Oh, steward! your arm to the side.)

"That wave, how transparent!

(Just give me a chair.)

The ozone, how nerving! (God sailor take care!)
Like a sea-king of old, I defy wind and tide,
And daring—

(Oh, steward! your arm to the side.)

"Thanks, steward! What? Really! You thought I was ill?"

Absurd! (*If those engines would only keep still!*) I could eat chops or oysters. Last time I near died;

While this trip——

(*Oh!!! steward! your arm to the side!*)"

It was not the steward, but two of the men, Who picked up the tourist so tenderly then— For he certainly not quite as crisp as a rusk was, But wretchedly limp, and extremely molluscous.

They lifted him tenderly, lifted with care,
"Fashioned so slenderly," laughingly bare;
Unhinged and dismantled, depressed and half dead,
They took him below, and they popped him to bed—
Or rather they tucked him, for what he was worth,
On the top of the shelf that on shipboard's "a berth."

But he cared not a whit did the boat swim or sink,
And his feeble lips parted, pale brandy to drink;
Yea! he cared not a jot were it hovel or palace,
Till he reached the smooth water just outside of Calais,
Where they helped him ashore like a sack.

Oh! perhaps

We may all of us be in this state of collapse.

MORAL.

If ever you go o'er the ocean to roam
(You had much better stay on the dry land at home),

Take a large piece of lemon, and mind that you chew hard—

If it does you no good, you can call for the steward.

GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

By permission of the Author.

A PRACTICAL JOKE.

TOM SHERIDAN was staying at Lord Craven's, at Benham (or, rather, Hampstead), and one day, proceeding on a shooting excursion, like Hawthorne, with only "his dog and his gun," on foot, and unattended by companion or keeper; the sport was bad—the birds few and shy—and he walked and walked in search of game, until, unconsciously, he entered the domain of some neighbouring squire.

A very short time after, he perceived advancing towards him, at the top of his speed, a jolly, comfortable-looking gentleman, followed by a servant, armed, as it appeared, for conflict. Tom took up a position, and waited for the approach of the enemy.

"Hallo! you, sir," said the Squire, when within half earshot; "what are you doing here, sir, oh?"

"I'm shooting, sir," said Tom.

"Do you know where you are, sir?" said the Squire.

"I'm here, sir," said Tom.

"Here, sir?" said the Squire, growing angry; "and do you know where *here* is, sir? These, sir, are *my* manors; what d'ye think of that, sir, eh?"

"Why, sir, as to your *manners*," said Tom, "I can't say they seem over agreeable."

"I don't want any jokes, sir," said the Squire. "I hate jokes. 'Who are you, sir?—*what* are you?'"

"Why, sir," said Tom, "my name is Sheridan—I am staying at Lord Craven's—I have come out for some sport—I have not had any, and I am not aware that I am trespassing."

"Sheridan?" said the Squire, cooling a little; "oh, from Lord Craven's, eh? Well, sir, I could not know *that*, sir—I——"

"No, sir," said Tom; "but you need not have been in a passion."

"Not in a passion! Mr. Sheridan," said the Squire. "You don't know, sir, what these preserves have cost me, and the pains and trouble I have been at with them. It's all very well for *you* to talk, but if you were in *my* place, I should like to know what *you* would say upon such an occasion."

"Why, sir," said Tom, "if I were in *your* place, under all the circumstances, I should say—'I am convinced, Mr. Sheridan, you did not mean to annoy me; and, as you look a good deal tired, perhaps you'll come up to my house and take some refreshment?'"

The Squire was hit hard by this *nonchalance*, and (as the newspapers say), "it is needless to add," acted upon Sheridan's suggestion.

"So far," said poor Tom, "the story tells for me—now you shall hear the sequel."

After having regaled himself at the Squire's house, and having said five hundred more good things than he swallowed; having delighted his host, and more than half won the hearts of his wife and daughters, the sportsman proceeded on his return homewards.

In the course of his walk he passed through a farmyard; in the front of a farmhouse was a green, in the centre of which was a pond; in the pond were ducks innumerable, swimming and diving; on its verdant banks a motley group of gallant cocks and pert partlets, picking and feeding; the farmer was leaning over the hatch of the barn, which stood near two cottages on the side of the green.

Tom ~~started~~ to go back with an empty bag, and, having failed in his attempts at higher game, it struck him as a good joke to ridicule the exploits of the day himself, in order to prevent any one else doing it for him; and he thought to **carry** home a

certain number of the domestic inhabitants of the pond and its vicinity would serve the purpose admirably. Accordingly, he went up to the farmer, and accosted him very civilly.

"My good friend," said Tom, "I'll make you an offer."

"A what, sur?" said the farmer.

"Why," replied Tom, "I've been out all day fagging after birds, and haven't had a shot. Now, both my barrels are loaded, and I should like to take home something. What shall I give you to let me have a shot with each barrel at those ducks and fowls—I standing here—and to have whatever I kill?"

"What sort of a shot are you?" asked the farmer.

"Fairish," said Tom, "fairish."

"And to *have* all you kill?" said the farmer, "eh?"

"Exactly so," said Tom.

"Half a guinea," said the farmer.

"That's too much," said Tom. "I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll give you seven shillings, which happens to be all the money I have in my pocket."

"Well," said the man, "hand it over."

The payment was made. Tom, true to his bargain, took his post by the barn-door, and let fly with one barrel and then with the other; and such quacking and splashing and screaming and fluttering had never been heard or seen in that place before.

Away ran Tom, and, delighted at his success, picked up first a hen, then a chicken, then fished out a dying duck or two, and so on, until he numbered eight head of domestic game, with which his bag was nobly distended.

"Those were right good shots sir," said the farmer.

"Yes," said Tom; "eight ducks and fowls were more than you bargained for, old fellow—worth rather more, I suspect, than seven shillings, eh?"

"Why, yes," said the man, scratching his head; "I think they be. But what do I care for that—they are none of *them* mine!"

"Here," said Tom, "I was for once in my life *beaten*, and made off as fast as I could, for fear the right owner of my game should make his appearance. Not but what I could have given the fellow that took me in seven times as much as I did for his cunning and coolness."

THEODORE HOOK.

BROTHER MATTEO.

BENT, and wrinkled, and worn with age,
Stooping over the gorgeous page,
Whereon he had painted with wondrous skill
Angels of good, and spirits of ill,
Brother Matteo sat in his cell.
There was the pallet he knew so well,

On which he had lain, ah! how many years!
How many years since that fateful day
Which had witnessed his last farewell for aye
To the world, with its joys, and its hopes and fears!
There hung the crucifix, nail'd to the wall,
His only comfort, to which in all

His hours of agony and despair
Brother Matteo had made his prayer.
The simple table, the single chair,
The sweet Madonna and Holy Child,
Gazing upon him with lustre mild,
Were the only treasures he harbour'd there.
And through the casement the dying day
Sent a light, that cast in a marvellous way
Saddening shadows on every thing.

A nightingale had begun to sing
Beneath the lattice, and with a sigh
He rose, to put his labours by:
The work of his life, the golden book,
Where, whoso gave but a passing look,
Might read, in the wonderful pictures thereon,
The Gospel according to St. John,
From "The Word was God" to "Follow thou Me,"
It was all set forth astoundingly.

To-night it was finished; his weary pen
Had traced the beloved Apostle's Amen,
And beneath, in a strange, fantastic scroll,
"Forgive the faults, and pray for the soul
Of Brother Matteo, who writ in sin
The words of comfort contained herein."
He rose with a sigh, and opened wide
The lattice, to welcome the thrilling tide
Of the nightingale's song; and so stood still,
With his elbow upon the window-sill,
And his chin on his weary and wasted hand;
So stood he, as a man will stand
Who muses upon his bygone days.

Not on the landscape did he gaze,
On the hills and vales that lay at his feet,
Nothing he saw of the waving trees,
Or the heavenly light that floods the leas
When day and night for a moment meet.
O'er fifty years his look was cast,
O'er fifty years, to the distant past,
Ere yet he had seen these gloomy walls,
Or had felt the deadly shadow that falls
On a heart, too strong, alas! to break,
And so end all, for a woman's sake.

He had been famous even then,
And had done great deeds in the sight of men;
No such miracle ever had been
As this mighty artist, scarce eighteen,
Whose canvas glowed with the hosts of heaven,
To whom it seemed there had been given
An inner sight, wherewith to see
The vision of God's own mystery.
And he himself, in his sunny hair,
Was then an embodiment of each fair
Lithe-limbed, blue-eyed, heroic saint,
His heart inspired his hand to paint;

Yet gentle withal, so that children came
To smile whenever they heard his name.
And as he swung through the busy street,
Full many a maiden's glance would meet
His candid eyes; but he strode on,
Unconscious and unscathed—alone;
Until one day he saw a face
That shone with a halo of virgin grace;
Meekly and humbly the maiden passed,
No look from her missal did she cast,—
And he knew the power of love at last.

I know not how he forced the door
Of her father's house; that wealthy boor
Held artist-folk in small esteem—
A merchant prince, whose ships were sent
To every port in the Orient—
But the door was forced, and the happy dream
Grew daily brighter, until at length
It overwhelmed them in its strength,
And each to each their love confessed,
And so, for one brief hour, were blessed.
For all her father's pride and wealth,
He could not woo the maid by stealth,
But spake right out—and the merchant swore
He never should cross his threshold more.
The days crawled by, and Francesca pined,
So the old man feigned to change his mind;
"If Ser Paolo"—the painter's name—
"Could justify his rising fame
By some great picture, why he would see;
If his faith was staunch, and his love was real,
And it truly appeared for Francesca's weal,
Well, there was no knowing what might not be."
With other words, such as people use,
Who pretend to give what they mean to refuse
"And, strangely enough, that very day
The Father Superior of San José
Had told him they needed an Altarpiece.
Now, here was a chance!—a golden fleece!
Fame and—*ducats*!"—Paolo heard
No further, but mounted a steed and spurred
To Monte Velino, where hidden lay
The Monastery of San José.
For weeks he painted, for weeks he dreamed;
The brothers, watching him, said it seemed
As if he dipped his magic brush
In his heart's own blood, and not in oil;
He took no rest from his feverish toil,
And, when they offered their *ducats*, "Hush!"
Said he, "I work for love!"—And home
He rode, with a lover's haste, to Rome.

Meanwhile Francesca had been wed
To Prince Gonzaga, upon whose head
Fifty winters their snows had shed.

Paolo breathed no sigh or groan,
But his heart within him turned to stone.
He painted no more: it seemed a part
Of his general hate, that he hated Art;

Silent he sat, and stert and grim,
And the children grew afraid of him.
Oh God! what a mournful change was this!
His golden locks, where erst the kiss
Of Phœbus Apollo loved to dwell,
In a tangled mass on his shoulders fell;
The brightness faded from his eye,
And his only wish was a wish to die.

Francesca—what shall I say of her?
She stood, a statue, amid the stir
Of the idle crowd, and the merry strife
Seemed a show to her, outside her life.
The only thing that she felt was real
Was the wound at her heart which would not heal;
Yet her keenest pain was that she knew
Paolo believed she had been untrue,
For never a message could she send—
She had crowds of flatterers, but no friend—
And so, like him, she prayed for the end.

Somehow, by chance, they met at last,
In a pleached walk, where the shadow cast
By the tragic cypress seemed to be
Fit mantle for their misery.
Deeply he looked into her eyes—
For the face may lie, and many lies
The tongue may speak, but I ween in sooth
The eyes say naught but the very truth.
One glance sufficed; there was little need
Of words, for now he knew indeed
That all his burden was as naught
To the load wherewith her soul was fraught;
So they spake little, but long they gazed,
Each upon each, with grief amazed;
Till at last, as the breeze the branches stirred,
This gentler whisper you might have heard—
"I love you more than life!" "And I
Shall ever love you till I die!"
"Sweetheart, good-bye!" "Sweetheart, good-
bye!"

He knelt and kissed her silken hem,
She stooped, and kissed his weary brow;
There was no thought of sin in them,
No thought which God might not allow.
And so they passed, and were lost to sight
In the ample bosom of the night.
A year went by. He strove in vain
To find some solace for his pain;
For, ever and ever, at his heart
Was the dull despair, and the cruel smart.
At last he arose, and made his way,
On foot, to the hills of San José.
The brethren greeted with glad surprise
The broken man; but in his eyes
They read such a wild and haggard woe
That they marvelled a man could suffer so.
His picture was famous far and wide,
His picture had brought a constant tide
Of pilgrims to their mountain shrine—
The Maiden Mother and Child Divine.

When to the altar their guest they led;
Upon its step he fell, as dead;
For the Virgin's face he had painted there
Was Francesca's face divinely fair,
Which he, possessed by a single thought,
Thus all unwittingly had wrought.
He sought the Prior, and told his tale
And prayed to be sheltered within the pale
Of their holy order, that in its calm
His heart might find some healing balm.
And so among them he came and went,
With dreamy eyes on his missal bent,
Until his novitiate was o'erspent.

Then came the day when his final vows
Should bind him for ever to their house,
With solemn ritual Mass was said
O'er living Paolo as if he were dead;
And when the awful rite was o'er,
Paolo was, indeed, "no more—
And "Brother Matteo" rose from the floor.

The Church was filled with a curious throng,
To see the rites and to hear the song,
And through the reverent, kneeling mass
The long procession had to pass;
And Brother Matteo, with downcast eyes,
Stepped slowly, chanting the litanies.
As thus he passed, one in the crowd
Spoke in a whisper, that seemed as loud
To this new Brother of San José,
As the angel's trumpet on Judgment Day,
"Nay, this is well, but a prouder show
Gonzaga's funeral was, I trow!"
"Dead?" asked his neighbour. "Two days since
They buried with pomp that pompous prince."
No more he heard, but his heavy head
Sank on his breast. Gonzaga dead!
Francesca free! Francesca free!
Could a merciful God let such things be?
Within his heart, with a mighty roar,
A voice replied, "Thou fool! give o'er!
Remember, Paolo is no more!"

And since that day, full fifty years
Had been spent by him in prayers and tears,
For his heart was too strong, alas, to break,
And so efd all, for a woman's sake.
But, as weary day followed weary day,
He grew more silent, and bent, and grey;
His only delight was his work upon
The Gospel according to St. John;
And never did eyes of man behold
A fairer book than that book of gold;
Yet now his labour of love was done:—
And he stood and mused in the setting sun.
At matins upon the following day
His absence was noted with dismay;
When the monks burst into Matteo's cell,
There he stood, whom they loved so well,
With his elbow upon the window-sill
And a yearning look in his faded eyes,

Across the valley, across the hill,
To the distant haze in the morning skies
Where—Rome! the Eternal City lies!
They called him, but he spake no word;
They called him louder,—he never stirred;
At last! at last! he had found his rest
Upon his Heavenly Master's breast.
One hand lay on his beloved book,
And he that had the courage to look,
Beheld, as a solemn mystery,
The index fallen, for all to see,
On Christ's last utterance, "Follow thou Me!"

LOUIS N. PARKER.

By permission of the Author.

THE RED THREAD OF HONOUR.

ELEVEN men of England
A breastwork charged in vain;
Eleven men of England
Lie stripped, and gashed, and slain.
Slain—but of foes that guarded
Their rock-built fortress well;
Some twenty had been mastered
When the last soldier fell.

Whilst Napier piloted his wondrous way
Across the sand-waves of the desert sea,
Then flashed at once, on each fierce clan, dismay,
Lord of their wild Truckee.
These missed the glen to which their steps were
bent,
Mistook a mandate from afar half heard,
And, in that glorious error, calmly went
To death without a word.

The robber-chief mused deeply
Above those daring dead:
"Bring here," at length, he shouted,
"Bring quick, the battle thread."
Let Eblis blast for ever
Their souls, if Allah will;
But we will keep unbroken
The old rules of the Hill.

"Before the Ghiznee tiger
Leapt forth to burn and slay;
Before the holy Prophet
Taught our grim tribes to pray;
Before Secunder's lances
Pierced through each Indian glen;
The mountain laws of honour
Were framed for fearless men.

"Still, when a chief dies bravely,
We bind with green *one wrist*—
Green for the brave; for heroes
One crimson thread we twist.
Say ye, oh, gallant Wilmen,
For these, whose life has fled,

Which is the fitting colour,
The green one or the red ?”

“Our brethren, laid in honoured graves, may wear
Their green reward,” each noble savage said ;
“To these whom hawks and hungry wolves shall
tear,
Who dares deny the red ?”

Thus conquering hate, and steadfast to the right,
Fresh from the heart that haughty verdict came ;
Beneath a waning moon, each spectral height
Rolled back its loud reclaim.

Once more the chief gazed keenly
Down on those daring dead ;
From his good sword their hearts' blood
Crept to that crimson thread.
Once more he cried, “The judgment,
Good friends, is wise and true,
But though the red be given,
Have we not more to do ?”

“These were not stirred by anger,
Nor yet by lust made bold ;
Renown they thought above them,
Nor did they look for gold.
To them their leader's signal
Was as the voice of God ;
Unmoved and uncomplaining,
The path it showed they trod.

“As, without sound or struggle,
The stars unhurrying march,
Where Allah's finger guides them,
Through yonder purple arch,
These Franks, sublimely silent,
Without a quickened breath,
Went, in the strength of Duty,
Straight to their goal of death.

“If I were now to ask you
To name our bravest man,
Ye all at once would answer,
They called him Mehrab Khan.
He sleeps among his fathers,
Dear to our native land,
With the bright mark he bled for
Firm round his faithful hand.

“The songs they sing of Roostum
Fill all the past with light ;
If truth be in their music,
He was a noble knight.
But were those heroes living,
And strong for battle still,
Would Mehrab Khan or Roostum
Have climbed, like these, the Hill ?”

And they replied, “Though Mehrab Khan was
brave,
As chief, he chose himself what risks to run ;

Prince Roostum lied,¹—till drowsily her eyes “began
Which these had never, and said, “Drink, pretty

“Enough !” he shouted fier.
“Doomed though they be to come in his garb of
Bind fast the crimson trophy
Round BOTH wrists ; bind it well, and how fast he
Who knows but that great Allah
May grudge such matchless men,
With none so decked in heaven
To the fiends' flaming den ?”

Then all those gallant robbers
Shouted a stern “Amen !”
They raised the slaughtered sergeant,
They raised his mangled ten :
And when we found their bodies,
Left bleaching in the wind,
Around BOTH wrists in glory
That crimson thread was twined.

Then Napier's knightly heart, touched to the core,
Rung, like an echo, to that knightly deed ;
He bade its memory live for evermore,
That those who run may read.

SIR F. HASTINGS DOYLE.

By permission of Messrs. MACMILLAN & CO.

MY DAUGHTER'S COOKERY.

WE used to have old-fashioned things, like cabbages
and greens,
We used to have just common soup, made out of
pork and beans ;
But now it's bouillon, consommé, and things made
from a book,
And Pot au Feu and Julienne, since my daughter's
learned to cook.

We used to have a piece of beef—just ordinary
meat,
And pickled pigs' feet, spare-ribs, too, and other
things to eat ;
While now it's fillet and ragout, and leg of mutton
braised,
And macaroni *au gratin* and sheep's head Hol-
landaised ;

Escallops à la Versailles—à la this and à la that,
And sweetbread à la Dieppoise—it's enough to kill
a cat !
But while I suffer deeply, I invariably look
As if I were delighted that my daughter's learned
to cook.

We have a lot of salad things, with dressing may-
onnaise,
In place of oysters, Blue-points fricasseed a dozen
ways,

and peach meringue,
 ch that is made of plated
 s have passed away, in silent, sad
 a highfalutin' things, but nothing much
 eat.
 a while I never say a word, and always pleasant
 look,
 But oh, I've had dyspepsia since my daughter's
 learned to cook!

TOMMY ON "LONDON."

"LONDON is a whopping big place; it must be bigger than all America. There's always something to see, as you go about, which makes it most interesting to a stranger. Everywhere the traffic is so great that if you want to cross the road you have to take the Underground Railway, or else holler to a policeman to conduct you across in safety, or you'd be run over in a jiffy. The policemen don't walk up and down the streets all day long as they do everywhere else; because there they have to stand in the middle of the road to keep back the horses and the carriages for the public benefit, just like Moses kept back the Red Sea for the Israelites. The City is the queerest place I ever saw. Some of the streets are so narrow that if six fat men were to walk alongside of one another, they would jam and fairly bust themselves. But there are other streets so broad that a boy can scarcely see across to the other side; and most of them have got such a lot of telegraph wires stretched over them that you can hardly see the daylight through them, so if a man was to drop from a balloon they would catch him, and he wouldn't hurt himself. There's not much to see on the Underground Railway, except a lot of darkness which is relieved by a few gas-lamps at respectable intervals, called stations. The way to get to these stations is down a sort of extra big manhole in the street. When you get to the bottom of the steps you find yourself in an ordinary railway station without a skylight, and by-and-by you see a bull's eye lantern come rushing out of a great black hole on one side, and before you can say Jack Robinson the train is right in front of you; and you are pushed into one of the carriages by somebody from behind to ride through the main sewers under the houses. If you was to put your head out of the window it might get knocked off, and you would be sorry for it; but most of the passengers shut themselves in to keep out the smell and the smoke. When the train pulls up at the bottom of the next man-

hole the steam from the engine gets all over the place, and makes you feel damp and uncomfortable, and reminds you of being at home on a washing day. If you want to go up the Monument you must be sure and have threepence about you, because they make no reduction for boys under twelve years of age. The view from the top is very grand when you get there, but before you do you have to walk round and round for more than half an hour, and the steps are so narrow that there isn't any room to sit down and rest yourself when you are half-way up. I don't know what they built that Monument for except to keep the man at the door in threepences as long as he lives; but perhaps he used to be a clerk in what they call the Civil Service, and this is how they reward his civility. The Tower of London is different from the Tower of Babel or any other Tower I ever heard about. The only thing I thought interesting about the place was the Beefeaters. I didn't see them eating their beef, because they were all busy showing people round. It must be very nice to be a Beefeater, I think. But I was ashamed of that Beefeater telling us about the Bloody Tower, where the Infant Princes were smothered by order of their wicked uncle King Henry the Eighth. He ought to have known better than to use such a wicked word before strangers. But perhaps he never went to Sunday School, and had not the blessing of a good, kind mother, as regularly took in tracts. They call that place Madame Tussaud's, where you can see the Kings and Queens of England, and a great many other celebrated characters, all dressed in their Sunday clothes and looking very happy. There's no policeman on the premises there, like in other places that you visit, because they've got a stuffed one of their own, which does as well. I found this out when I asked him the way to the Chamber of Horrors. As he didn't speak I sat down by an old gentleman with an ugly chimney-pot hat on, who wanted all the seat to himself, and wouldn't move up when I asked him to. I was just going to dig a pin into him when I saw his number, and found out he was stuffed as well. The Chamber of Horrors is sixpence extra, which is all the public executioner has to live on when his work is slack. If you don't want to dream awful things at night you had better keep outside, and spend your money on something else. The Zoological Gardens are most interesting at feeding-time, which is four o'clock in the afternoon. Oh! it's fine fun to see the roaring lions and other wild animals grabbing at their meat, and being in such a hurry for it that they don't mind eating it raw. A boy told me it costs a thousand pounds a week to feed the animals. If I was a butcher I should try to do business with the Zoological Gardens, because it would be worth while. The British Museum is a fair sell. There's nothing to see there except antiquities and a lot of dirty-looking pigeons flying about on the watch for crumbs outside. In

all the big rooms that you have to walk through there is a man with a long stick, which I suppose is on purpose to prevent the flies from settling on the statues. Most of the statues have had their arms or their legs, or else their heads knocked off; but they're evidently thought a lot of, because I saw more than half a dozen red-haired girls drawing them as if it was for an examination. The mummies are all dead, and I don't see what good they are being kept in glass-cases for people to stare at, just as if they were something wonderful. The only place about the British Museum I cared for was the Refreshment Room. The bun I had cost twopence, but it must have belonged to one of the mummies, for I couldn't chew it."

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

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VISIONS.

In lone Glenartney's thickets lies couched the lordly stag,
The dreaming terrier's tail forgets its customary wag;
And plodding ploughmen's weary steps insensibly grow quicker,
As broadening casements light them on towards home, or home-brewed liquor.
It is in brief the evening—that pure and pleasant time,
When stars break into splendour, and poets into rhyme;
When in the glass of Memory the forms of loved ones shine,
• And when, of course, Miss Goodchild's is prominent in mine.
Miss Goodchild—Julia Goodchild—how graciously you smiled
Upon my childish passion once, yourself a fair-haired child:
When I was (no doubt) profiting by Dr. Crabb's instruction,
And sent those streaky lollipops home for your fairy suction.
"She wore" her natural "roses, the night when first we met"—
Her golden hair was gleaming 'neath the coercive net:
"Her brow was like the snowdrift," her step was like Queen Mab's,
And gone was instantly the heart of every boy at Crabb's.
The parlour boarder chasseed tow'rds her on graceful limb;
The onyx deck'd his bosom,—but her smiles were not for him:

With me she danced—till drowsily her eyes "began to blink,"
And I brought raisin-wine, and said, "Drink, pretty creature, drink."

And evermore, when winter comes in his garb of snows,
And the returning schoolboy is told how fast he grows;
Shall I—with that soft hand in mine—enact ideal Lancers,
And dream I hear demure remarks, and make impassioned answers.

I know that never, never may her love for me return—
At night I muse upon the fact with undisguised concern—
But ever shall I bless that day: I don't bless, as a rule,
The days I spent at "Dr. Crabb's Preparatory School."

And yet we two *may meet* again—(Be still, my throbbing heart!)
Now rolling years have weaned us from jam and raspberry-tart.
One night I saw a vision—'twas when musk-roses bloom,
I stood—we stood—upon a rug, in a sumptuous dining-room:

One hand clasped hers—one easily reposed upon my hip—
And "BLESS YE!" burst abruptly from Mr. Goodchild's hip:
I raised my brimming eye, and saw in hers an answering gleam—
My heart beat wildly—and I awoke, and lo! it was a dream.

C. S. CALVERLEY.

By permission of Mrs. CALVERLEY.

THE FIRST-FOOT.

BRIGHT the firelight touched his portrait hanging on our humble wall,
But a sweeter life was in us, with a deeper, purer glow—
He was coming home, our darling—fair and frank, and broad and tall—
First-foot on our simple threshold, covered with the New Year's snow.

"Twelve o'clock will strike, dear wife, before the train comes in to-night,"
Said my husband in the doorway, he, too, glad at heart and gay;

And he turned a step to meet me as I whispered,
soft and light,
"Let him enter first," and smiling at my words
he went away.

Then I turned, my own heart bursting at the joy
about to come,
Drew the chair a little nearer to the glowing
evening fire;
Heard in freaks of my own fancy all the laughter
and the hum
Of a well-known voice that whisper'd ever at my
least desire.

Fondly to myself I pictured all his much-prized
honours won,
Earnest of the future harvests that the years
would open up;
Caught a hundred whispers rising with this burden
still, "our son;"
O! a mother's joy has not one drop of gall within
the cup.

Then I went, and by the window watch'd with
eager gazing eye
All the distant railway lights that slowly came in
sight to me;
Question'd to myself, "Now, which of these far
lights is bringing nigh
Our first-foot for the New Year in one little
hour to be?"

But a deep chill, like a viper's touch, crept through
me as I stood,
Bringing hand-in-hand a terror, as behind the
farthest light
Rose another in the darkness, that like one great
splash of blood,
Gleam'd like a murder seen of God within the
folds of night.

Rooted to the place I stood, and watch'd its steady,
fiery gleam,
All my pulses in my being beating as in act to
fail;
And my heart sank down within me, like a stone
flung in the stream,
As behind it rose an engine's whistle with a
ghostly wail.

For at that drear whistle all the years broke from
their rusty bands,
Each one teeming with its fatal slip, that hap-
pen'd in a breath—
How a traitor wheel, or pointsman's hasty clutch of
faithless hands,
Scattered broadcast human lives to grace the
silent feast of death.

Oh! what battles hope had all that weary hour
with countless fears;
What deep, silent prayers rose upward that the
lips still fail'd to speak;

What deep pain within the bosom, with its load of
unwept tears
That would not give one kindly drop to soften
brow or cheek?

Came the hour at last, and striking, each stroke
sounded like a knell,
Bodeful of some fate—but hark! a sound of
footsteps at the gate,
And my tears burst from their prison, and rose
upward like a well,
At the coming joy about to crown my long and
weary wait.

Then I heard the sound of whispers faint, as if in
awe suppress'd,
And with all my wild, deep dread within, I
open'd up the door—
Saw a burden in strange arms, and in their silence
found the rest—
O, my God! first-foot in Heaven! and for days
I knew no more.

Slowly dawn'd the truth upon me, as my life came
back again—
How a signal, clear a moment to the engine-
driver's eye,
Brought him on with ringing rush and crash,
against and through the train!
And my life's one hope lay mangled in that
sudden shock and cry!

Years have pass'd, but still that time brings round
the great red light to me;
With it come the solemn footsteps, and the
whispers, hush'd and low;
And again the door is open'd, while like one struck
dumb, I see
My darling's blood with that round light upon
the ghastly snow.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

By permission of the Author.

ONE OR TWO?

A DUOLOGUE.

BERTHA. BLANCHE.

SCENE.—A garden or park. A seat in the centre
of the stage.

[BERTHA and BLANCHE enter hurriedly from
opposite sides.]

BERTHA. Blanche!

BLANCHE. Bertha!

BERTHA. I have such news for you!

BLANCHE. So have I for you, dear.

BERTHA. Oh, Blanche, how shall I tell you?

I—I am engaged.

BLANCHE. [Somewhat coldly.] Indeed?

BERTHA. Yes. Perhaps I ought not to have

told you so abruptly. I hope it doesn't make you—

BLANCHE. Make me what?

BERTHA. [*Hesitating.*] Well—a—may I say, just a little—a very little—envious?

BLANCHE. [*Tossing her head.*] Envious? Oh dear no! Not in the least. Because, the fact is, I am engaged too.

BERTHA. [*Surprised, but not very warmly.*] No? BLANCHE. Yes, I am engaged to one of the best, dearest fellows in the world.

BERTHA. How very strange! Now that is just what I have to say of my lover.

BLANCHE. Oh, Bertha! Aren't we lucky to have become engaged to two such nice men? But when did it happen?

BERTHA. Only yesterday morning.

BLANCHE. And I promised to be his only yesterday evening.

BERTHA. That is very curious, indeed. But I must tell you all about it. I had come out quite early to see the sun rise, and met him at the bottom of the hill.

BLANCHE. Really? And I had gone to the top of the hill to see the sun set, when he came up and proposed to me.

BERTHA. It is quite extraordinary. But I have not yet told you what my dear boy is like.

BLANCHE. No. And I am burning to hear. [*They sit.*] I wonder whether your intended is as tall as mine.

BERTHA. Is he tall? Well, my lover is quite six feet.

BLANCHE. Yes. That is just his height. And he has the most beautiful fair hair.

BERTHA. Dear me! Why his hair is fair too, and he has such a lovely moustache and beard, both exquisitely trimmed.

BLANCHE. Why, that is the exact description of my intended, so far. One would almost think they were twins.

BERTHA. It is funny. Then he told me that I was the very first girl he had ever loved.

BLANCHE. Precisely his words to me. At least he said he had never loved any girl before.

[*The girls pause and look at each other with just a sign of uneasiness.*]

BERTHA. Blanche, this is a very singular coincidence—very. [*Reflects for a moment.*] What is the profession of your lover?

BLANCHE. The law—he is at the Bar.

BERTHA. [*Rising hastily—while Blanche does the same.*] The law? At the Bar? Why, my lover is a barrister too!

BLANCHE. Oh, Bertha, this is strange indeed! But you have not told me his name—and yet—and yet—don't speak—I almost fear to ask it.

BERTHA. And I hardly dare to tell you—for, oh, Blanche dear, I have a horrible suspicion.

BLANCHE. And so have I.

BERTHA. Let us only tell a little bit of their names at a time.

BLANCHE. My lover's Christian name begins with an F.

BERTHA. So does his.

BLANCHE. And ends with a K.

BERTHA. The same—the same in his case. But tell me, what are the first and last letters of his surname?

BLANCHE. Another F and an R.

BERTHA. [*Pacing the stage in great agitation.*] Oh, Blanche, Blanche, it must be the same! We have both been deceived. It is the same man who has proposed to both of us.

BLANCHE. Oh, if that should be? But no, no, I could not believe such a thing of my dear Frederick.

BERTHA. Frederick? Why, my lover's name is Frank!

BLANCHE. No? And his other name is not Fowler?

BERTHA. Certainly not. It is Fisher.

BLANCHE. What a relief! Then they must be different persons after all.

BERTHA. [*Doubtfully.*] It would seem so. But there is a strange, an almost suspicious likeness between the names. Suppose—oh suppose—they—be—altered them to deceive us.

BLANCHE. It is dreadful to think of—but possible.

BERTHA. Blanche, I am beginning to be horribly afraid that you have been the victim of a cruel fraud.

BLANCHE. I, dear? No, you.

BERTHA. How can that be? Frank proposed to me first—that is yesterday morning.

BLANCHE. But he—or at least Frederick—proposed to me afterwards—in the evening.

BERTHA. What of that?

BLANCHE. What of that? Don't you see? If your Frank and my Frederick are one and the same person, he must have altered his mind during the day.

BERTHA. That is very unlikely. And to tell you the truth, Blanche, I don't think it at all nice of you to say so.

BLANCHE. But what else could I say? I was the last one to be proposed to, so I am "up to date."

BERTHA. [*Angrily.*] That is, you mean to say that I am out of date. Thank you.

BLANCHE. I could not say anything so rude.

BERTHA. Perhaps not, but you meant it.

BLANCHE. Bertha, I think you are behaving disgracefully in this matter. A man proposes to you quite early in the day. He takes time to reflect over what he has done, and repents before the evening. And yet you would hold him to his word.

BERTHA. And you would accept a man who had just deserted your own friend. Blanche, your conduct is base.

BLANCHE. And yours is mean.

BERTHA. I mean? Oh, you—you wicked girl!

BLANCHE. [*Sinking upon one end of the seat and bursting into tears.*] Oh dear, oh dear, that I should be called such a name after all the kindness I have done you for years!

BERTHA. [*Sinking upon the other end of the seat and also crying.*] And to think that this is to be the end of our old friendship!

BLANCHE. [*Looking round at Bertha.*] I don't want ever to speak to you again.

BERTHA. [*Looking round at Blanche.*] And I hope I shall never see you any—any more.

[*Both girls go on sobbing hysterically for a few moments. Presently Blanche starts and listens.*]

BLANCHE. Hush! I hear a footstep.

BERTHA. Hark! I hear it too. [*The girls rise.*]

BLANCHE. [*Pointing to the right.*] It is coming this way.

BERTHA. [*Pointing to the left.*] No, it is coming this way.

BLANCHE. [*Looking to the right.*] Good gracious! It is my Fred.

BERTHA. Your Fred? Why, he is a perfect stranger to me. [*Turns to left.*] And, oh goodness! there is my Frank.

BLANCHE. Your Frank? Why, I never saw him before in my life.

BERTHA. Blanche!

BLANCHE. Bertha!

BERTHA. To think that we should have had such a quarrel after all these years of friendship!

BLANCHE. And I called you mean.

BERTHA. And I called you base.

BLANCHE. Bertha, dear, can you forgive me?

BERTHA. Can you forgive me, dearest Blanche?

[*The girls rush into each other's arms and embrace.*]

BLANCHE. [*Turning to right.*] Hark! I hear his voice.

BERTHA. [*Turning to left.*] And he is calling to me.

BLANCHE and BERTHA. [*Together.*] Darling—I come!

[*The girls run off in opposite directions, and the curtain should fall quickly before they have quite disappeared.*]

E. J. GOODMAN.

By permission of the Author.

WHAT BABY BROUGHT.

A CHRISTMAS STORY.

I LOVE them well—those Christmas bells, that merrily over the snow
Speed forth God's message of peace to man. Yet
once, in the long-ago
On a night like this, when their sweet acclaim
throbbed out on the frosty air,
I had nought but a curse for the gladsome notes
that seemed mocking my wild despair.

A bitter curse for those merry bells, as they sang
o'er land and sea:
"The Saviour came as a little Child that peace on
earth might be!"

Was I mad? Almost; for the woe that lies on the
vanquished in the strife

Was mine, and its weight upon brain and heart
was crushing out hope and life;

And only the thought that a white, sad face would
sadder and whiter grow

Prevented me taking the coward path the despair-
ing so often go.

A white, sad face that a year before was a blossom
of health—rose-red!

When love was sanguine, and hope ran high, and
we knew not the fight for bread.

Ere a tempting thought took my brain in thrall,
and I, nursing it, dreamed a dream

Of fame and fortune for me and mine, to be gained
in a well-planned scheme.

We needed it not, for when we were wed there was
money enough to keep

The gaunt wolf Poverty far away, did I let my
ambition sleep.

But Annie, to mine, brought a fortune snug—a
pleasant and goodly store—

That, instead of contenting, cursed my soul with a
mad desire for more.

So up in the City, where Mammon reigns, and
honour is bought and sold,

Where Justice carries a mummer's foil made blunt
by a button of gold,

I told my scheme to a cunning rogue, disguised as
a candid friend,

Who prophesied speedy and sure success, for he
knew I had money to spend.

I took his word; and my fortune flew in expenses
that gathered apace.

Too late I discovered the smiling hound played
cheat to my very face;

And the web of promise so deftly spun by the
spider for me, the fly,

Held common-sense in its mesh until I was ruined,
and drained, and dry!

Yes, ruined! Oh, heaven, my wife and child! In
my mad pursuit of wealth

Engrossed, I saw not that Annie's cheek was losing
the rose of health,

But now it, haunted me, haggard and wan; and
horror!—my heart stood still!

For not all the cause was my cold neglect, but
Minnie, our babe, was ill!

Sick unto death was our one wee lamb! Our little
one loved so well!

But Mammon-worship can freeze the soul; and
when Annie had striven to tell

Her dread that the babe was failing, I dismissed
her alarm with a jeer
That "mothers were easily frightened," for I
deemed it a foolish fear.

She whitened and winced at my coldness: I saw
the tears gather and start;
I felt I was brutal and callous, but the greed shut
remorse from my heart.

Yet now, when my folly has brought us a harvest
of sorrow and pain,
She uttered no word to reproach me, nor ever once
turned to complain.

But her hand sought out mine as, together, we
watched that small life ebb away,
For the doctor had told us the angels would have
a new playmate ere day.

And just in the break of the morning the tiny form
struggled for breath,
And the flush of the fever gave place to the ashy-
grey pallor of death.

One gasp!—then the heavy eyes opened: she lifted
her beautiful head,
Raised her arms with a smile—"Daddy! Mammy!"
fell back; and our darling was dead.

* * *
A month waned out, then another; and I saw,
though she made not a sign,
How sorrow was slowly sapping the life that was
bound up with mine.
But ever she tried to cheer me, and pictured a
future bright;
Yet I knew that the smiles of daytime were
drowned by the tears of night.

A hundred pounds would have saved us; but I
found that each old-time friend
Was lavish with wordy pity, yet had never a
shilling to lend;
And heartsick, weary, and broken, I returned
through the Christmas snow,
To tell her my quest was hopeless, and the wreck
of our home must go.

What wonder my thoughts were bitter—that my
lips should a curse out-fling,
As the bells from a score of steeples proclaimed
that a Babe was King?
But Heaven forgave—and a blessing came down
from the angels fair,
For I found upon reaching my doorstep that some-
thing was lying there.

'Twas a basket—I raised it, and entered. "Come,
Annie, my dear," I said.
"Some friend has sent us a Christmas gift, and
kindness is not yet dead."
But on lifting the lid I started back, while the
room seemed to round me whirl,
For, warm in contented slumber, lay a cherub-faced
baby girl.

The smart wee gown bore a paper, and on it these
words were penned:

"Be kind to a motherless babe, forlorn, and God
will a blessing send."

We looked at each other a moment—then out of
its cosy nest

My Annie lifted the dimpled child, and laid it
against her breast.

I hadn't the will to check her, though my heart
was as heavy as lead,
With the knowledge I bore that a day at most—
and we should be wanting bread.

For a look of content that I long had missed stole
over her features pale

As she said "Amen! For a mother's love this
little one shall not fail."

Then, guessing the cause of my troubled look, in
loving rebuke she cried,

"This lamb is sent for the one we lost, and Pro-
vidence will provide!"

And the little one waking smiled and cooed. "As
you will, so let it be!"

I answered her then; but my faith was weak, and
the future all dark to me.

But I pardon asked for my doubts that night,
when Annie the babe undressed,

And discovered a packet of bank-notes crisp laid
close to its tiny breast;

Two hundred pounds, with a single line, half-
warning and half-appeal—

"May God, as you deal with this helpless one, with
you in His justice deal."

* * *
Not little now? Well, see for yourself. That
was many a year ago.

There she is, in the hall. You can hear her laugh
as she shakes off the clinging snow,

And gives her mother a Yule-tide kiss! Hark,
now, how the music swells:

"The Saviour came as a little Child!"—Sweet
song of the Christmas bells!

STUART ROBERTSON.

From LLOYD'S NEWSPAPER.
By permission of the Editor.

THE WAKING OF THE LARK.

O BONNIE bird, that in the brake, exultant, dost
prepare thee—

As poets do whose thoughts are true, for wings
that will upbear thee—

Oh! tell me, tell me, bonnie bird,
Canst thou not pipe of hope deferred?

Or canst thou sing of naught but spring among the
golden meadows?

Methinks, a bard (and thou art one) should suit
his song to sorrow,
And tell of pain, as well as gain, that waits us on
the morrow;

But thou art not a prophet; thou,
If only joy can touch thee now;
If, in thy heart, thou hast no vow that speaks of
Nature's anguish.

Oh! I have held my sorrows dear, and felt, though
poor and slighted,
The songs we love are those we hear when love is
unrequited.

But thou art still the slave of dawn,
And canst not sing till night be gone,
Till o'er the pathway of the fawn the sunbeams
rise and quiver.

Thou art the minion of the sun that rises in his
splendour,
And canst not spare for Dian fair the songs that
should attend her.

The moon, so sad and silver-pale,
Is mistress of the nightingale;
And thou wilt sing on hill and dale no ditties in
the darkness.

For queen and king thou wilt not spare one note
of thine outpouring;

Thou art as free as breezes be on Nature's velvet
flooring.

The daisy, with its hood undone,
The grass, the twilight, and the sun—
These are the joys, thou holy one! that pay thee
for thy singing.

Oh, hush! oh, hush! how wild a gush of rapture
in the distance—

A roll of rhymes, a roll of chimes, a cry for love's
assistance;

A sound that wells from happy throats,
A flood of song where beauty floats,
And where our thoughts, like golden boats, do
seem to cross a river.

This is the advent of the lark—the finest in grey
apparel—

Who doth prepare to trill in air his sinless summer
carol;

This is the prelude to the lay
The birds did sing in Caesar's day,
And will again, for aye and aye, in praise of God's
creation.

A dainty thing on wonder's wing, by life and love
elated,

Sing, sing aloud from cloud to cloud till day be
consecrated;

Till from the gateways of the morn,
The sun with all his light unshorn,
His robes of darkness round him torn, doth scale
the lofty heavens!

ERIC MACKAY.

By permission of the Author.

A MYSTERY OF MANCIPLE'S INN.

MRS. GREENIGH knew very little about the stage, and cared less. Nowadays, it would seem that out of every half-dozen persons we meet, three are going, or want to go, on the stage, two are writing dramas, and only one is quite indifferent to histrionic affairs. Mrs. Greenigh was therefore exceptional. She came of a dissenting family, who set their faces against theatrical exhibitions of any kind, and regarded all those who took part in them as black sheep, or children of perdition. Without holding such extreme views herself, Mrs. Greenigh still looked with disfavour upon "the profession;" on rare occasions, indeed, patronising the drama, but only in its most serious and severe form.

Robert Greenigh, Esq., was a general correspondent to the *Daily Calendar*, whose circulation, as everybody knows, reaches to six figures. Mr. Greenigh's lutes were various: he was an obedient slave of the lamp, ever ready to go anywhere and do anything at the bidding of the editorial magician. Naval and military reviews, boat-races, prize-fights, Exeter Hall meetings, theatrical first nights, or Riviera gaieties—all came within his province to chronicle or describe. He was therefore, a great deal away from home, and when in London frequently stayed at his chambers in Manciple's Inn, E.C. When off duty he was to be found at his suburban residence, "Jalousie Villa," Finchley Vale, N., a house so named because it had Venetian blinds to all the windows.

Of late Mr. Greenigh had become one of the dramatic critics of the *Weekly Proscenium*. His wife was by no means gratified at this extended theatrical connection, nor did she altogether approve of his living so much in chambers; there was a sort of irresponsible bachelorism in the very idea. In reality he was a steady-going citizen, for whom the stage had long ceased to have any illusions, and who was neither of an age nor a temperament for reckless Bohemianism. But Mrs. Greenigh was not convinced of this; she had her doubts and fears and misgivings, although, up to the present time, she had wisely kept them to herself. But one fatal morning Mrs. Greenigh made a discovery. It happened in this wise. Mr. Greenigh, having previously announced that he would probably not be home that night, departed hurriedly to catch the 10.5 train to town. Just before starting he lit a cigar, and after he had gone Mrs. Greenigh happened to pick up the piece of paper he had used as a "spill." It was the remnant of a letter received by him that morning; the writer's name, like most of the contents, had been "burnt and purged away," but on what remained these startling words were plainly visible: "Lucy will come to your chambers at Manciple's Inn to-morrow evening at seven."

Mrs. Greenigh, though rather a strong-minded lady, was for the moment quite overcome. A

whole vista of terrible possibilities was at once unfolded to her view. Who was Lucy? Mrs. Greenigh knew no one of that name. Evidently there was a mystery here, and Mrs. Greenigh, who was fond of mysteries at all times, had naturally a vital interest in this one. She might have solved it at once by rushing after her departed lord and demanding an explanation, but by this time the ten-o'clock train was well on its way; so, after many deep cogitations on the mystification, she resolved to investigate it secretly, and in person. "If Lucy is going to be there at seven o'clock this evening, then so will I!" said Mrs. Greenigh to herself.

This was the easier of accomplishment as she intended to go up to town that afternoon, on a shopping expedition. When that business was over, then for the pleasure of popping in upon Mr. Robert unawares!

In due time she set out, and on this occasion got through her shopping most expeditiously. In two hours and a half—including an interval for refreshment at the confectioner's—she had bought pretty nearly everything she wanted, and having filled a hansom with her purchases, she ordered the cabman to drive her to Manceiple's Inn.

On arriving, a little after seven o'clock, she dismissed the cab at the entrance, having previously had her parcels taken up to the first landing. But she ascertained that Mr. Greenigh's rooms, which she had never visited before, were on the next floor; so, leaving her luggage, she mounted another flight, stealthily and cautiously, "in the gloaming," like a detective or a conspirator.

Then she stopped suddenly, and clutched at the balustrade for support; for the first sounds she heard, although just what she had anticipated, came upon her with a terrible shock. There were two voices—one was that of Robert Greenigh, the other unmistakably feminine! Mrs. Greenigh approached the closed door (the keyhole was unfortunately not vacant), and stood on the mat to listen. Yes, they were talking and laughing in the liveliest manner, little dreaming that the outraged avenger was so near.

"This is how it goes," said the feminine voice.

There was a creaking as if some one had suddenly sat down on a music-stool, and the next moment, after a melodious prelude on the piano, a rich contralto pealed forth the following:

Oh! meet me, darling, meet me,
Or my longing heart will break,
At eve beneath the willows
Softly drooping o'er the lake;
When silver moonlight ripples,
And the gentle zephyrs wake,
Will you meet me, will you meet me
On the margin of the lake?

Then the refrain was repeated, and Robert's baritone voice could be heard chiming in—

I'll meet thee, yes, I'll meet thee.

They went through another verse, which was very much to the same purpose.

This ditty would no doubt have pleased any impartial hearer, but Mrs. Greenigh was in no mood to appreciate its beauties, either as a composition or a performance. Already she had heard enough, she believed, to confirm her worst suspicions; nevertheless, she waited breathlessly for what was coming next.

"There, don't you think that will fetch 'em, eh, Bob?" said the lady vocalist.

Bob! the familiar—too familiar—sound came to Mrs. Greenigh like a box on the ear.

"Lovely! Lucy," exclaimed Mr. Greenigh. (We have charitably punctuated his words in this way, but to Mrs. Greenigh they seemed to form one exclamation, the "lovely" applying to Lucy and not to the song.)

"It isn't half bad," remarked the unseen contralto; "sure to go well, especially as I shall sing it in a new and magnificent dress I am having made for the part, with a peacock-blue satin train six feet long. How's that for high, old man?"

"Why, you'll look splendid!" answered Mr. Greenigh; "but there, you always do!"

"Oh, sir, spare my blushes!" returned his companion, in a demure and affected voice.

"Upon my word, Lucy, you're a marvel!"

"I *yam*! I *yam*!" acquiesced the other, in burlesque tones. "I'm going to have several photos taken in that dress, and you shall have a whole copy, all to yourself."

"Thanks, Lucy, and I'll have it set in an amber-plush frame, ornamented with stuffed kittens!"

"I say, I think I'd better get ready," said Lucy, audibly rising from the piano. "I sha'n't be long, and then we'll get into a hansom and go together."

"Of course we will," replied Mr. Greenigh.

"I'll just pop into your room and put on my evening dress," (1) said Lucy; "and if you've no objection, Robert, I'll take another cigarette!"

The striking of a match and a "puff preliminary" could be heard.

Mrs. Greenigh could endure this no longer. Here was a discovery indeed! She had played the spy to some purpose. To her the situation was perfectly clear. Lucy was evidently connected with the stage; not the severe and classical stage which alone Mrs. Greenigh could tolerate, but some fast and frivolous variety or histrionic art. Probably, indeed, Lucy was one of those dreadful persons who perform at the objectionable places known as music-halls. Her cigarette-smoking and slangy style of conversation, not always quite intelligible to Mrs. Greenigh, confirmed this conclusion.

To put all doubt at rest, Mrs. Greenigh at length made a "sensational" entrance upon the scene of action. Violently turning the handle of the door, she flung it open suddenly and widely, and con-

fronted her astonished spouse. He was alone, the inner door was closed.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed Mr. Greenigh, who was standing with his back to the fireplace, "I little thought of seeing you!"

"I am quite sure of *that*," she replied, "I was neither expected nor desired, that's evident, but I have sworn to give you a surprise, and so—I am here!"

"You seem agitated?"

"Rather!"

"What's the matter?"

"You ask me what's the matter?—you actually have the audacity to look me in the face and pretend to be unconscious! Oh! I can scarcely contain myself!"

"Is anything wrong?" he asked, quietly.

"Oh, no, of course not," she answered, with biting sarcasm. "It's all quite right and proper, no doubt, and particularly agreeable to *me*, of course."

"Really, my dear, you're talking in riddles. Pray explain yourself. Sit down and have a cup of tea."

"Tea!" She gave him a withering look, and then began pacing the room like an encaged and enraged tigress.

The room was rather large and comfortably furnished. There was a pianette in the corner, with some manuscript music above its open keyboard; several theatrical portraits adorned a cabinet opposite, and on the central table were the remains of "tea for two."

"Oh Robert!" burst out Mrs. Greenigh, tragically, "to think that all these years I have been cherishing a viper!"

"I do wish you'd tell me what you're driving at," he replied. "Who—what has upset you?"

"Who? *what*?—you exasperate me beyond patience by assuming this idiotic ignorance! As if you didn't know! I know all—and a pretty discovery I've made! I've suspected something for some time, but I was a blind fool, and didn't suspect half enough, or soon enough. But my eyes are opened at last. *Now* I know the real reason of your being so much away from home. *Now* I know why you want a piano, which you can no more play yourself than you can work a sewing machine!"

"I took it with the rest of the furniture from Blithers the barrister," pleaded Mr. Greenigh meekly.

"*Now* I know how your money goes," she proceeded. "It is to buy peacock-blue satin dresses, with trains six feet long!"

"Never bought such a thing in my life," he protested.

"'Tis false! but 'tis useless to argue with you. I'm positive she's here. I heard her voice. Produce her at once. I insist upon seeing her!"

"Who?"

"Lucy!"

"Lucy?" Mr. Greenigh's mouth and eyes both opened wide, and then, as if something had suddenly struck him as exquisitely ridiculous, he flung himself into an armchair and went off into a fit of laughter.

This inexplicable and ill-timed merriment only added fuel to the flame of his wife's wrath.

"So it's a laughing matter, is it?" she asked. "Well, we shall see, when this affair comes into court, for come it shall, as sure as my name is Maria Selina!"

Mr. Greenigh only laughed louder, and exclaimed, in half-cooked accents, "Oh, this is too good!"

"Too good? Your conduct is too *bad* for anything! But it shall be punished as it deserves. Robert Greenigh, the world shall know how I've been wronged, insulted, basely deceived, and by *you*!"

"Nothing of the kind," he protested, trying to be serious.

"If I could only find words to express my opinion of your baseness!" she exclaimed. "And to think I have wasted my life upon such a—hollow mockery. You are trying to break my heart, but it sha'n't break—there! I look upon you not in sorrow, but in anger. You want me to cry, but I won't—no—never!" and she flung her handkerchief on the floor and stamped upon it.

Mr. Greenigh had by this time finished laughing.

"Maria," he said, "what a pity you don't go on the stage! You'd make your fortune as a tragedy queen!"

"Silence!" she answered, "and do not further insult me by your levity. Luckily your very wickedness will lead to my relief. Your staying away from home half your time amounts to desertion, and as for the main charge, it's as clear as daylight!"

"Nothing's certain in this world," he replied, with provoking calmness.

"Certain enough for a court of law. After I get my decree, I know what I'll do. My native land has become hateful to me. I will leave it for ever!"

"No, don't do that!" he said, "think better of it!"

"I can't think worse of it than it deserves," returned the irate lady, somewhat vaguely.

There was a pause, and now could be heard the hated voice of Lucy in the inner room blithely warbling—

"I love my love! I love my love!"

"There," cried Mrs. Greenigh. "*Now* am I right? *Now* can you deny that she's in that room? Oh! I'll teach her to sing!"

She snatched up her sunshade, a massive implement, almost as formidable as the official umbrella of a British commander-in-chief. Armed with this weapon, the avenger approached the inner door; but her husband interposed.

"Hush!" he said; "don't make a disturbance; don't do anything rash!"

"I tell you I will!" *

"At least wait till Lucy's dressed!" said Mr. Greenigh.

Mrs. Greenigh paused. The hardened depravity of this man was something astounding. Or had he suddenly become unsettled in his mind, and thus unconscious of the enormity of his offence?

Mrs. Greenigh grasped her sunshade, and was about to make another rush towards the offending door, when she heard the handle of it turn from within. She drew herself up rigidly, her eyes gleaming, and her heart beating fast, as she prepared for the encounter. Then the door opened, and there emerged—

A young man in evening dress, just finishing the tying of his white cravat as he advanced into the room.

"I'm ready if you are, old man," said the individual to Mr. Greenigh, and then stopped short at perceiving Mrs. Greenigh.

"My wife," said Robert.

"Delighted, I'm sure," returned the stranger, politely.

Mrs. Greenigh did not know what to say; she could do nothing but stare at the mysterious visitor.

He was apparently a very young man of rather small and dapper figure, with dark curly hair, piercing eyes, and features so clearly cut and even delicately formed that for a moment the idea flashed upon her that this might be a double deception, and that the strange youth was really a disguised— But no, *that* was impossible!

"My dear Maria," said Mr. Greenigh, utterly ignoring the stormy interview which had just taken place between them, and had fortunately not reached the ears of the new comer, "allow me to present to you Mr. Edmund Lucy, the celebrated mimic and entertainer."

"Actor, ventriloquist, and polyphonic vocalist," added the person referred to, and then continued, with true professional volubility, "quick-change artiste extraordinary, and inventor of the new and startling effects of varying light, whereby the most magical transformations in face, figure, costume, and character are produced in full view of the audience. 'We challenge the world to produce his equal.' That, madam, is what the papers say of me—not what I say of myself, of course; I'm too modest for that."

"Not at all!" answered Mrs. Greenigh, scarcely knowing what she was saying, for her anger had melted into sheer bewilderment.

"The *Weekly Blazer* says of my performance," continued the artiste, "'The marvellous mimetic and vocal powers possessed by Mr. Edmund Lucy are really phenomenal. He can keep up the most realistic *falsetto*, not only for a few minutes, but for the entire evening. He can perform any character, in any language, of any nationality, of any age, young or old, masculine or feminine. He can

sing, speak, and recite in any voice, whether *basso profondo*, *tenore robusto*, *alto*, *mezzo*, or high *soprano*.' Listen;" and this remarkable individual carolled forth some miscellaneous snatches of song, beginning with "The Wolf," and so through "I Fear no Fox," "My Pretty Jane," "The Storm," &c., winding up with a flourish from the "Shadow Air" in *Dinorah*!

"It's marvellous!" exclaimed Mrs. Greenigh.

"It is—I admit it," returned this vocal Proteus, putting on his light overcoat.

"It's noteworthy, too, Maria," observed Mr. Greenigh, "that our friend here is descended from the Sir Thomas Lucy who prosecuted Shakespeare for deer-stealing."

"Indeed!—how interesting!" said Mrs. Greenigh.

"Several relics of my distinguished ancestor are still preserved in our family," added Mr. Lucy.

"My wife would like to go to your entertainment this evening," said Robert.

"I shall be proud and happy," answered the performer; "and please note, Mrs. Greenigh, that it is my first appearance in the character of Miss Flora Fleurette, the belle of New Orleans, with song, 'Meet Me by the Lake.' Here he unrolled a lithograph of a young lady in a peacock-blue satin dress, with a voluminous train.

"And now, Robert," said Mr. Lucy, "we've no time to spare. We must take a four-wheeler and drive post-haste to my show at the Babylonian Hall, Pall Mall North."

"And, dear me, Robert, I was forgetting all about my parcels," said Mrs. Greenigh.

The entertainment that evening was a brilliant success, and nobody enjoyed it more than Mr. and Mrs. Greenigh. In the course of the evening "The World's Own and Only Entertainer" (as Mr. Lucy was unassumingly described in the bills) represented a dozen characters, three of them feminine, and among these latter the peacock-blue satin heroine was first favourite.

Mr. Greenigh promised his wife never to breathe to a living soul what had passed that evening at his chambers in Manciple's Inn. But somehow the story got about, to the intense amusement, especially, of the "polyphonic vocalist."

Mrs. Greenigh never unearthed any more "mysteries" after the notable, but pardonable, blunder she had been led to commit; and as, since Robert has become chief contributor to the *Social Thunderbolt*, he does most of his work at home, and has given up his chambers and his theatrical connections, her mind is much relieved on all points. But whenever she shows any tendency to undue jealousy or unfounded suspicion, he can always silence her with the talismanic word "Lucy!"

MORAL.—"Seeing is not always believing"—nor hearing either!

WALTER PARKER.

By permission of the Author.

THE CALIPH'S DRAUGHT.

UPON a day in Ramadan—

When sunset brought an end of fast,
And in his station every man
Prepared to share the glad repast—
Sate Mohtasim in royal state,
The pillau smoked upon the gold;
The fairest slave of those that wait
Mohtasim's jewelled cup did hold.

Of crystal carven was the cup,
With turquoise set along the brim,
A lid of amber closed it up;
'Twas a great king who gave it him.
The slave poured sherbet to the brink,
Stirred in wild honey and pomegranate,
With snow and rose-leaves cooled the drink,
And bore it where the Caliph sate.

The Caliph's mouth was dry as bone,
He swept his beard aside to quaff—
The news-reader beneath the throne
Went droning on with *ghain* and *kaf*—
The Caliph drew a mighty breath,
Just then the reader read a word—
And Mohtasim, as grim as death,
Set down the cup and snatched his sword.

"*Ann' amratan Shureefatee!*"
"Speak clear!" cries angry Mohtasim;
"*Fe laer mid ilj rain ulji*!"—
Trembling the newsman read to him
How in Ammorra, far from home,
An Arab girl of noble race
Was captive to a lord of Roum;
And how he smote her on the face,

And how she cried, for life afraid,
"Ya, Mohtasim! help, O my king!"
And how the Kafir mocked the maid,
And laughed, and spake a bitter thing.
"Call louder, fool! Mohtasim's ears
Are long as Barak's—if he heed—
Your prophet's ass; and when he hears,
He'll come upon a spotted steed!"

The Caliph's face was stern and red,
He snapped the lid upon the cup;
"Keep this same sherbet, slave," he said,
"Till such time as I drink it up."
Wallah! the stream my drink shall be,
My hollowed palm my only bowl,
Till I have set that lady free,
And seen that Roumi dog's head roll!"

At dawn the drums of war were beat,
Proclaiming, "Thus saith Mohtasim:
'Let all my valiant horsemen meet,
And every soldier bring with him

A spotted steed." So they rode forth,
A sight of marvel and of fear:
Pied horses prancing fiercely north,
Three lakhs—the cup borne in the rear!

When to Ammorra he did win,
He smote and drove the dogs of Roum,
And rode his spotted stallion in,
Crying, "*Labhayki!* I am come!"
Then downward from her prison-place
Joyful the Arab lady crept;
She held her hair before her face,
She kissed his feet, she laughed and wept.

She pointed where that lord was laid;
They drew him forth, he whined for grace;
Then with fierce eyes Mohtasim said—
"She whom thou smotest on the face
Had scorn because she called her king;
Lo! he is come! and dost thou think
To live, who didst this bitter thing
While Mohtasim at peace did drink?"

Flashed the fierce sword—rolled the lord's head,
The wicked blood smoked in the sand,
"Now bring my cup!" the Caliph said.
Lightly he took it in his hand;
As down his throat the sweet drink ran
Mohtasim in his saddle laughed,
And cried, "*Taiba asshrah alan!*"
"My God! delicious is this draught!"

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD.

By permission of the Author.

MUSIC FOR THE MILLION.

HIGH and haughty since her marriage,
She sat stuck up in her carriage,
Feet on earth, but head among the constella-
tions;
As she scornfully looked round her,
All the men exclaimed, "Confound her!"
While the ladies murmured, "Oh, I've no pa-
tience!"

Said the worthy village rector,
"May Heaven soon forget her,
For in every parish pie she'll have a finger!
But I hush each dark misgiving,
Or she'd snatch away my living;
That were sad while in this vale of tears I
linger!"

Let us call her Lady Morgan.
Said she, "Why, you have no organ
In this church of yours, you stupid country
people!"
Said they, "Can't afford to buy one;"
Said she, "Then I will supply one,"
And drove off, with feather higher than the
steeple.

"Twas a new thing in the village,
Rustics left their teams and tillage,
As her butler bore it in and set it going;
The churchwardens were delighted,
So were all of those invited,
For the music was so clear, and rich, and
flowing.

The next Sunday, when in action,
It gave wondrous satisfaction;
All approved, except the rector, Dr. Burman,
For it played the first Psalm neatly,
And the second very sweetly,
With four verses of the hymn before the sermon.

But a fifth one was not wanted,
Though it gave it, nothing daunted,
Very gravely, too, began another;
Then the rector looked offended;
Ledy Morgan wished it ended;
Followed whispers, looks, and coughs, and
smothered laughter.

Verses four, five, six, and seven,
Verses eight, nine, ten, eleven;
Tried to stop it both schoolmistress and school-
master;
Up went beadle in a hurry,
Up went clerk, all fume and flurry,
Poking at it—but it only played the faster.

Verses eighteen, nineteen, twenty,
Just as though they'd not had plenty!
As though music for the million it were playing;
'Twas supposed they'd not overwound it,
There was quite a crowd around it,
And how long it meant to go there was no
saying.

Fiercely sat down Dr. Burman,
Fiercely shut up he his sermon,
Red and wrathful looked he under the infliction;
Ledy Morgan, warm with fanning,
Called her butler, Peter Manning;
"Take it out!" she cried—and brooked no con-
tradiction.

Up went Peter, roughly grasp'd it,
In his great long arms he clasp'd it,
Not a single note or cadence would it smother;
It would not be so soon put out,
It would have its little tune out,
It would grind in one place as another.

Down the stairs you heard them winding,
There was no end to the grinding,
It went through the Book of Psalms without
assistance;
Grinding up the church's centre,
Grinding out where people enter,
Till it died upon the ear in the far distance!

Then, with choler effervescing,
Rose the rector, gave his blessing,
Blessed the people, beadle, clerk, and Ledy
Morgan;
And there does not lack a rumour,
That, not being in good humour,
He was also heard to bless—the barrel organ!

LONDON MEADOWS.
(REV. CHAS. B. GREATREX.)

By permission of the Author.

RESCUED.

I WAS walking in the meadows near a river, when a
boy,
And with me was my dearest friend, a big retriever,
Roy:
He was hunting 'mong the alders, out of sight. . .
I heard a scream . . .
A plunge . . . a struggle . . . then a bark. I
ran towards the stream.

I pushed aside the alders—sprang down the grassy
shore.
I saw an eddying circle . . . a field-flower . . .
nothing more,
Save the black muzzle of my Roy, cleaving his
watery way,
To where upon the sluggish stream the little field-
flower lay.

Then sudden rose a tiny hand . . . O God! I saw
it plain.
Is it beyond the reach of Roy, before it sinks
again?
"Good Roy!" I shout. "Brave dog!" the banks
re-echo with my cries—
One struggle more . . . Hurrah! Hurrah! My
Roy has won his prize.

With tender lips he brought the child, and laid her
at my feet;
And from that hour I took the freight God sent
me, as was meet.
Most precious gift, through all these years, of all
the gifts that be—
A loving heart was saved by Roy, who brought my
wife to me!

HAMILTON AIDÉ.

By permission of the Author.

THE REV. MILLIKIN MILDMAE EXPLAINS.

LET me say a few words.

My name is Millikin Mildmay, and I am the
curate of St. Simon the Simple. Notwithstanding

whatever may have been said of late to the contrary, I am a peaceful and mild-mannered man. The only "blue" I ever got at Oxford (where my cousin, Charles Downey, characterised me as a "smug") was the one I wear in my coat as a member of the Blue Ribbon Army. When I was inducted into my curacy at St. Simon's, I found, to my dismay, that my cousin Charles had taken lodgings in that desirable suburb, he having gone into business on the Stock Exchange.

Charles is not a bad fellow, but I must confess I should like him better if he were a little less prone to chaffing me, especially before my young lady parishioners, who, I regret to say, are not so shocked at his levity as might be expected. And then he is such a fellow for slang; really, his vocabulary is at times a sealed book to me. And again, I am sorry to say he bets money on horse races; he says it is a relief to do a little reliable business after the excitement of Capel Court gambling. Still, I never disliked Charles until I fell in love with Miss Dora Dimplechin, the only daughter of my estimable vicar, and she evinced signs of preferring my cousin Charles Downey to me; that is to say, she always chose him rather than myself as her partner at tennis (this, she declared, was due to my many faults). She called him Charlie; me she always addressed as Mr. Mildmay. She even once or twice accompanied him when he sang comic songs far from encouraging to the cause of temperance and rectitude; and on one occasion, I grieve to state, she acceded to his request that she would allow him to back in gloves a horse named Jim-Jams for a race on the Derby Day at a place called Epsom. The horse won the race, and Miss Dimplechin got a huge box of gloves, and was very nice to Charles, while she snubbed me when I said a few words on the evils of gambling; and I was much grieved to hear her remark to a young lady friend that I should be ever so much nicer if I were not such a "muff."

It was a few days after this that I was taking a lonely walk with my little dog, some miles out, collecting botanical specimens. I somehow lost my way, and wandered down a narrow lane between two fields. Just as I turned a corner my little dog squeaked and scampered back to me, and I had only just time to take her up in my arms (she is of the feminine gender) when a great bull-dog ran up to us, with the evident intention of eating her. This desire seemed to be transferred to me, and I really did not like the look of the animal. 'It was almost as broad in the chest as it was long, though not at all stout behind; it had bandy fore-legs, and its nose was so flat that I really think it must have met with an accident in infancy.' It began to sniff contemptuously at my trousers, and although I said "Go away!" quite sharply, it took no notice. I was much relieved to hear a man whistle, because the dog left me and went in the direction of the sound, but my alarm returned at the appearance

round the corner of a man whose features strongly resembled those of his canine companion. Just as I turned a bend in the lane, I came suddenly on a group of men leaning over the railings which separated it from the field. They were talking very rapidly and loudly all together, and I grieve to say that their language was far from proper; indeed, when it was not improper it was profane.

I was surprised to observe that a corner of the field was fenced off with ropes, forming a square, which these men spoke of as a ring, so that at first I thought possibly they were engaged in endeavours to square the circle. Diagonally opposite, two men lightly clad were seated in the corners of the square, each upon the knee of another man, while in each corner a third man held a towel and a bottle containing liquid.

"Well," said the man who belonged to the bull-dog, "if we stops here argifyin' like this we shall never get to business: Billy's got lagged, for certain about his last mill with the Walworth Chicken, or else he'd a bin here."

Another gentleman remarked: "Look at 'ere. Your side won't 'ave none of ours to act as referee, an' we won't 'ave anybody of your party. Wots to be done?"

Just then they caught side of me, and then they very rudely caught hold of me—and they were very strong men too. I told them not to be so rude, and one of them asked if I were what he called a "tec." I replied that I did not know, inasmuch as I was unaware what a "tec" was; then the man with the dog exclaimed: "Oh! he's all right, he's a sky-pilot. Look here, cullies, let's make him act as referee, that'll be fair to both," and the other men replied: "'Ear, 'ear," and "Right you are!"

"I said: 'Let me say a few words. Mrs. Muffit, my respected landlady, is expecting me home to my tea, and if I stay here my tea will get so cold, and Mrs. Muffit will get so cross!' and then I grieve to say the man with the dog said something very rude with regard to Mrs. Muffit which I will not repeat. He then said: 'Look at here, the lads is waiting to get to work, and our referees ain't turned up; an' we ain't got a time-keeper appointed, so you'll 'ave to act as 'ref.' and 'clocker' as well."

But I said: "My dear sir, I've never acted at all except in charades and *tableaux vivants*, and I presume you are about to render a pastoral play." He asked me at whom I was getting, and then informed me that it was a match to the finish with one minute between the rounds, that I should have to call "Time!" at the commencement and termination of each round of three minutes. They hustled me over that fence, and crowded round the rope fencing, against which they placed me. Then the two men in the corners rose, and approached and shook hands in quite a friendly way, so that I felt a little easier in my mind.

"Now then," the bull-dog man said, "call 'Time!'"

I said: "Really it's time for me to be off. Mrs. Muffit will be very cross indeed!" but his only reply was that he would bash me to a jelly if I did not comply.

I am very fond of jelly as Mrs. Muffit makes it, but I have no desire to become one, so I said, politely: "Time!"

"Chuck it orf yer chest," said the bull-dog man, so I said "Time!" again, quite loudly; then, to my horror, these two men advanced towards each other, and assumed a mutually menacing attitude.

I said: "Let me say a few words. What is the bone of your contention?" but the bull-dog man told me very abruptly to shut up. Then those two dreadful men began to hit each other, very hard, too, and I should have called to them to leave off, only the bull-dog man said that if I made any remark but "Time!" he would hit me, and I really believe he meant it. At last one of them fell down, and the men in his corner rushed forward and dragged him there, and gave him some light refreshment; then they mopped his face with a sponge, and slapped it quite hard with a wet towel, while one of them, holding two corners of another towel, stood up and fanned him vigorously. This performance was repeated in the other corner, until sixty seconds had elapsed, when the bull-dog man nudged me so hard in the ribs that 't took my breath away, and I gasped out "Time!" whereupon the two men rose and recommenced assailing each other.

Until that day I had no idea that the English language contained so many words of the existence of which I was unaware, though my cousin Charles had convinced me that Dr. Samuel Johnson had not exhausted our vocabulary in the compilation of his celebrated dictionary. These men seemed to be in the habit of giving everything a name that everybody else gave to something else. For instance, when one of the men gave the other a blow on the mouth, they referred to "a daisy on the tatur trap," and said "it made the ivories rattle"; while another (a gentleman attired in a tweed suit of a remarkable pattern, whom I understood to represent a paper devoted to sporting interests) spoke of the blood that issued from the noses of the combatants as the claret having been tapped by a visitation on the "boko." Then, again, forcible blows in the ribs were styled "pile drivers," and upon the right eye of one man swelling so dreadfully as to close it, the bull-dog man remarked that "Jimmy was putting his shutter up," and the sporting gentleman that "the dexter peeper was in mourning"—all of which puzzled me exceedingly.

At last one man made quite a spiteful blow at the other, which, I am sure, had it, as the crowd called it, "gone home," or "landed," would have hurt him; the latter, however, quickly flowered his head,

and gave his assailant what I should have described as a blow in the pit of the stomach, but that the bull-dog man called it a "hot'un on the mark," whereon the man to whom the mark belonged very suddenly laid down on the grass. His two friends rushed out and carried him back to the corner, where they made the most strenuous efforts to restore consciousness, going even to the length of biting his ear, and inserting the blade of a pen-knife under his finger nails. I was by this time very much shocked, and more than ever wished myself at home in my rooms, enjoying my tea and reading the parish magazine, when at this crisis some one shouted: "How about time?"

The bull-dog replied: "Time be ——" something which I can't express—"it wants two seconds."

"No it don't, it's up!" the first one insisted. Just then the man whose mark had been driven rose from his corner and advanced to the centre of the ring, where his opponent was awaiting him.

Then there was a great commotion. The man who had said that time was up came round to me and threatened to do most dreadful things—of some of which I had never heard—to me if I didn't, as he termed it, give his man the fight; on the other hand the bull-dog man threatened me with many still more dreadful things if I did. I felt more uncomfortable than ever, and more than ever wished myself at home.

"Was the time up or not, cully?" demanded the apparent owner of the man who did not own the mark; and the bull-dog man added: "Yus. Answer that, an' if y' say it was, then——" here he expressed a pious hope for Providential interference on my behalf.

I said: "Allow me to say a few words. I really cannot say whether time was up or down before the man who was down came up; for the simple reason that, in the excitement of the moment, some one has taken my gold watch which my aunt Matilda bought me when I got my degree. Will that person kindly restore it?"

But at that moment there was a shout of "Copper!" I said: "No, it is not copper; it is real gold," when the crowd surged together in confusion. The wooden things, stakes, I think they called them, though I don't think they were the stakes they were fighting for, were taken out of the ground in a hurry, and the whole crowd rushed off, leaving me, to my great relief, alone. I was still more relieved to observe half a dozen policemen, headed by a sergeant, approaching at a trot, and I determined to speak to the inspector about the watch that my aunt Matilda had given me; but my relief turned to dismay when the police-sergeant said to his men: "Arrest that man! Anyway, we've got one of the ringleaders."

I said: "Sergeant, will you allow me to say a few words?"

"They'll be taken as evidence against you," he

replied; "we've been watching you from behind those trees on the hill there, so it's a clear case. Clerical garb, too. I suppose that's a fake-up."

More English that was foreign to me. I began to get quite confused, and, before I really knew where I was, I was in the nearest police-station, charged with aiding and abetting a breach of Her Majesty's peace, to wit, a prize-fight.

I sent immediately to the vicar and to Mrs. Muffit, and, on their arrival, it was difficult to tell which was the more distressed. I said a few words to them both, explaining the situation, but, to my great surprise, they were neither of them at all sympathetic; indeed, I was quite perturbed to observe on both their faces an expression of incredulity.

"Well," said the vicar, at length, "there appears no doubt that whatever were your motives, or whatever influences were brought to bear, you were caught *flagrante delicto* taking an active official part in a determined prize-fight between two well-known pugilists."

Just then the constables brought in a man who was also charged with aiding and abetting the same prize-fight. They said they had had a long and exciting chase after him. On his being searched they found my gold watch with my name engraved upon it, given to me by my aunt Matilda. On my being asked to identify my property, the person in whose possession it was found explained that he had picked it up, and, thinking I had joined in the crowd, was running after me at his top speed for the purpose of restoring it. Incidentally, I may observe that this man paid a great tribute to my firmness in refusing to give the fight to the man who had hit the man with the mark, and said I was the pluckiest "ref." he'd ever seen. I said it was very kind of him, and expressed my intention of giving him a couple of sovereigns for his trouble. At this the superintendent also indulged in some foreign English relative to a "mug" and a "flat," and, as I stated in reply that I had no intention of prosecuting the man who had found and restored my watch, he, after some consultation with my vicar, permitted me to leave the police-station, not, however, without a stern and unnecessary warning not to "mix myself up in a prize-fight again; a warning which my vicar reiterated.

Of course the story got about, and I was quite aghast at the reflection that nobody believed my protestations, and the prospect of being generally shunned. Much to my surprise, however, I was besieged by all manner of applicants for particulars of the affair. My cousin Charles was absolutely respectful to me, though his ingenuity as to my absence of volition in the matter pained me.

"On that point," I said, "Charles, I wish to say a few words," and Charles recommended me to say as many as I liked—to the marines, though I did not see, nor do I yet, what that branch of the services had to do with the matter.

"Anyway," he said, "all the sporting clubs are loud in your praise. Nine men out of ten would have given it to the Brixton Bounder, surrounded as you were by all the rammers and lumberers in London and Leicester."

My aunt Matilda, too, greatly surprised me. Instead of expressing her determination to cut me out of her will, she gave me ten ten-pound notes for a birthday present, and said she was glad to see I had proved myself a man, and upheld the honour of the family. But the greatest surprise of all was that Dora Dimplechin, though she said she was shocked, and insisted, in spite of all my protestations, that I was a very dreadful, wild, sporting young man, was so amiable to me from that day that I at last plucked up courage enough to ask her a question I had, in the language of Charles Downey, "funked" till then, and, notwithstanding her father's expression of his views that I was a bit too wild even for a young man, dear little Dora consented to change her name from Dimplechin to Mildmay.

Nevertheless, I have declined scores of applications from the National Sporting Club to hold myself in readiness to officiate as referee in case of the unavoidable absence of a gentleman named Angle.

II. T. JOHNSON.

By permission of the Author.

"TOMMY ATKINS."

WHAT HE DID IN '53.

ALL day we had fought and followed, we were weary and faint and few;
The treacherous dogs we had fed and trained gave us enough to do;
Through jungle, o'er nullah, from dawn to noon, they had fought and fled that day,
Till at last, before a grey fort's walls, Jack Sepoy turned at bay.

We had scarce a ration among us, and the water-course was dry,
Where my brave fellows lay about, 'neath the burning Indian sky,
I knew we must take the fort ere night, yet I scarcely cared to speak;
By my own hot wound and flagging pulse, I knew they were worn and weak.

Yet ready as at a home parade, my lads to order sprang,
As the bugle note through the heavy sleep, unwelcome summons rang;
Not a mutineer among them there, but knew the "Goth" call,
Yet the challenge brought no answering yell back from the silent wall.

No bullets rained as the heavy gates crashed 'neath
our fierce assault,
No lurking ambush burst on us from corridor or
vault;
Empty the mighty palace lay; the sinking sunlight
shed
Its lustre on the jungle path, by which the traitors
fled.

And yet we found one living thing amid the silence
there,
A withered hag who tossed her arms, and tore her
scanty hair,
Who hovered vulture-like around a well beneath
an arch,
And shrieked, as I have heard the kites that follow
on a march.

I'd learnt her tongue enough to catch, 'mid curse
and wild lament,
The tale she told while at my feet her tattered veil
she rent;
The brutes who slew our babes, to save from us
their own,
Women and children down the well ere taking
flight, had thrown.

Down to its darkling depths I looked—'tis horrible
to tell,
An awful sinuous movement stirred the surface of
the well;
And as I stood as one aghast, amid my startled
band,
I saw—we saw—a moment rise a little dusky hand.

The soldiers gathered round me, and ere a word I
spoke,
One gallant fellow from the rest, all eager purpose
broke;
He'd got a rope so slight and frail, you who are
listening now
Would scarcely with such slender stay swing from
yon chestnut bough.

'Tis a long yarn, and soldiers make bad tellers of a
story,
We do the work, and leave to you at home to sing
the glory;
When Sergeant Toole had done his task, around
that awful well
Eight corpses lay; ten children lived of a second
birth to tell.

The women—women do such things—had held
their babes, I think,
While sense and strength endured, above the
sullen waters' brink;
However it was, there lay the babes, sore needing
help and food,
And we, worn, wounded, famished—was Life a gift
so good?

Half-gazed I stood and watched the hag who o'er
them crooned and wept,
When to my side with glad salute two stalwart
privates stepped;
They had snared a milch-goat in the bush, and
found the welcome prize
Wan lips laughed out, and hunger gleamed from
eager, wistful eyes.

I looked at the brave fellows who had done and
dared so much
To wrench old England's choicest gem from mur-
der's treacherous clutch;
I saw their bitter need, I thought of hideous
cruelties,
Things that made strong men mad to hear, wrought
'neath the shuddering skies;

Wrought by those dying children's sires—I thought
of all, and then
I turned and spoke—spoke to the ring of patient
suffering men:
"The food is yours, my lads—well earned—take it
and eat your fill.
Only those babes are perishing! I say, do what
you will."

They talk of days of chivalry—no old romaunt I
swear
Has chronicled a nobler act, than that I witnessed
there,
As my rough soldiers, wounded, starved, and
agonised with thirst,
Gave the goat and all her precious milk to the race
they held accursed.

To their children who had torn our babes from their
shrieking mothers' hold,
Who had done such deeds as blanched men's cheeks,
who only heard them told;
Deeds that nerved palsied hands to clench, lit
cowards' blood to flame,
And made all Europe, far and wide, shrink at a
Sepoy's name.

I saw them feeding tenderly each little dark-skinned
waif,
And spare their rags to wrap their limbs, and leave
them warm and safe;
I never ate a costly meal with half such appetite,
As those dry crusts and onions shared, in the
gleaming Eastern night.

I was proud to fight beside them, I was proud to
lead them on,
They who in simple kindness so grand a deed had
done;
And when his faults and follies, you sleek home-
keepers tell,
I think what "TOMMY ATKINS" did, beside that
Indian well.

SUSAN K. PHILLIPS.

By permission of the Author.

THE BATH OF THE STREAMS.

Down unto the ocean,
Trembling with emotion,
Panting at the notion,
See the rivers run —
In the golden weather,
Tripping o'er the heather,
Laughing all together—
Madcaps every one.

Like a troop of girls
In their loosened curls,
See, the concourse whirls
Onward wild with glee;
List their tuneful tattle,
Hear their pretty prattle,
How they'll love to battle
With the assailing sea.

See, the winds pursue them,
See, the willows woo them,
See, the lakelets view them,
Wistfully afar,
With a wistful wonder
Down the green slopes under,
Wishing, too, to thunder
O'er their prison bar.

Wishing, too, to wander
By the sea-waves yonder,
There awhile to squander
All their silvery stores;
There awhile forgetting
All their vain regretting
When their foam went fretting
Round the rippling shores.

Round the rocky region,
Whence their prison'd legion,
Oft and oft besieging,
Vainly strove to break,
Vainly strove to throw them
O'er the vales below them
Through the clefts that show them
Paths they dare not take.

But the swift streams speed them
In the might of freedom,
Down the paths that lead them
Joyously along;
Blinding green recesses,
With their floating tresses,
Charming wildernesses
With their murmuring song.

Now the streams are gliding,
With a sweet abiding—
Now the streams are hiding
Mid the whispering reeds—

Now the streams outglancing
With a shy advancing,
Naiad-like go dancing
Down the golden meads.

Down the golden meadows,
Chasing their own shadows—
Down the golden meadows,
Playing as they run;
Playing with the sedges,
By the water's edges,
Leaping o'er the ledges,
Glist'ning in the sun.

Streams and streamlets blending,
Each on each attending,
All together wending,
Seek the silver sands;
Like to sisters holding
With a fond enfolding—
Like to sisters holding
One another's hands.

Now with foreheads blushing
With a rapturous flushing—
Now the streams are rushing
In among the waves.
Now in shy confusion,
With a pale suffusion,
Seek the wild seclusion
Of sequestered caves.

All the summer hours
Hiding in the bowers,
Scattering silver showers
Out upon the strand;
O'er the pebbles crashing,
Through the ripples splashing,
Liquid pearl-wreaths dashing
From each other's hand.

By yon mossy boulder,
See an ivory shoulder,
Dazzling the beholder,
Rises o'er the blue;
But a moment's thinking,
Sends the Naiad sinking,
With a modest shrinking,
From the gazer's view.

Now the wave compresses
All their golden tresses—
Now their sea-green dresses
Float them o'er the tide;
Now with elf-locks dripping,
From the brine they're dipping,
With a fairy tripping,
Down the green waves glide.

Some that scarce have tarried
By the shore are carried
Seaward to be married
To the glad gods there;
Triton's horn is playing,
Neptune's steeds are neighing,
Restless with delaying
For a bride so fair.

See at first the river
How its pale lips quiver,
How its white waves shiver
With a fond unrest;
List how low it sigheth,
See how swift it fieth,
Till at length it lieth
On the ocean's breast.

Such is youth's admiring;
Such is youth's desiring;
Such is hope's aspiring
For the higher goal;
Such is man's condition,
Till in heaven's fruition
Ends the mystic mission
Of the eternal soul.

DENIS FLORENCE MACCARTHY.

By permission of Messrs. M. H. GILL & SON.

EXTEMPORISING A MELODRAMA.

[The following extract from the *Diary* of the Rev. R. H. Barham may serve as a model for a similar performance not necessarily improvised.]

THEODORE Hook placed himself at the pianoforte, and gave a most extraordinary display of his powers, both as a musician and an improvisatore. His assumed object was to give a specimen of the ballets formerly produced at Sadler's Wells, and he went through the whole of one which he composed upon the spot. He commenced with the tuning of the instruments, the prompter's bell, the rapping of the fiddle-stick by the leader of the band, and the overture, till, the curtain being supposed to rise, he proceeded to describe:

The first scene. A country village—cottage (o.r.)—church (p.s.). Large tree near wing. Bridge over a river occupying the centre of the background. Music. Little men in red coats seen riding over bridge. Enter Gaffer from cottage, to the symphony usually played on introducing old folks on such occasions. Gaffer, in recitative, intimates that he is aware that the purpose of the Squire is thus early

A-crossing over the water,

Is to hunt not the stag, but my lovely daughter.

Sings a song and retires, to observe Squire's

motions, expressing a determination to balk his intentions:

For a peasant's a man, and a Squire's no more,
And a father has feelings, though never so poor.

Enter Squire with his train. Grand chorus of huntsmen—"Merry-toned horn, Blithe is the morn," "Hark forward, away, Glorious day," "Bright Phoebus," "Aurora," &c. &c.

The Squire dismisses all save his confidant, to whom, in recitative, he avows his design of carrying off the old man's daughter, then sings under her window. The casement of one pair of stairs opens. Susan appears at it, and sings—asking whether the voice which has been serenading her is that of her "true blue William, who, on the seas, is blown about by every breeze." The Squire hiding behind the tree, she descends to satisfy herself; is accosted by him, and refuses his offer; he attempts force. The old man interferes, lectures the Squire, locks up his daughter, and exit (p.s.). Squire sings a song expressive of rage, and his determination to obtain the girl, and exit (p.s.).

Whistle. Scene changes with a slap. Public-house door; sailors carousing, with long pigtailed, checked shirts, glazed hats, and blue trousers. Chorus, "Jolly tars, plough the main—Kiss the girls, sea again." William, in recitative, states that he has been "with brave Rodney," and has got "gold galore"; tells his messmates he has heard a landlubber means to run away with his sweetheart, and asks their assistance. They promise it.

Tip us your fin! We'll stick t'ye, my hearty,
And beat him! Haven't we beat Bonaparty?

Solo, by William, "Girl of my heart, Never part."
Chorus of sailors, "Shiver my timbers," "Smoke and fire, d—n the Squire," &c. &c. Whistle—scene closes—slap.

Scene—the village as before. Enter Squire; reconnoitres in recitative; beckons on gipsies, headed by confidant in red. Chorus of gipsies entering—"Hark? Hark? Butchers dogs bark! Bow, wow, wow. Not now, not now." "Silence, hush! Behind the bush. Hush, hush, hush!" "Bow, wow, wow." "Hush, hush!" "Bow, wow." "Hush! hush! hush!"

Enter Susan from cottage. Recitative:

What can keep so long at market?
The sun has set, altho' it's not quite dark yet.
Butter and eggs.
Weary legs.

Gipsies rush on and seize her; she screams; Squire comes forward. Recitative affectuoso—"She scornful, imploring, furious, frightened!" Squire offers to seize her; True Blue rushes down and interposes; music agitato; sailors in pigtailed beat off gipsies; confidant runs up the tree; True Blue collars Squire.

Enter Gaffer:

Hey-day! What's all this clatter?
William ashore? Why, what's the matter?

William releases Squire; turns to Sue; she screams and runs to him; embrace; "Lovely Sue; own True Blue;" faints; Gaffer goes for gin; she recovers and refuses it; Gaffer winks, and drinks it himself; Squire, recitative—"Never knew, about True Blue, constant Sue." "Devilish glad; here, my lad; what says dad?" William, recitative—"Thank ye, Squire; heart's desire; roam no more; moored ashore." Squire joins lovers—"Take her hand; house and bit of land; my own ground;

And, for a portion, here's two hundred pound!"

Grand chorus; huntsmen, gipsies, and sailors with pigtales; solo, Susan—"Constant Sue; my own True Blue." Chorus; solo, William—"Dearest wife, laid up for life." Chorus; solo, Squire—"Happy lovers, truth discovers." Chorus; solo, Gaffer—"Curtain draws, your applause." Grand chorus; huntsmen, gipsies, sailors in pigtales; William and Susan in centre; Gaffer (o.p.), Squire (p.s.), retire singing:

Blithe and gay—Hark away!
Merry, merry May;
Bill and Susan's wedding day.

REV. R. H. BARHAM.

WILSON'S LAST STAND.

SEE the Matabele scatter, as the little band rides past,
Bent on reaching Lobengula, while the waning light shall last,
Thinking, ah, alas! so rashly, they had but to see and seize,
Heeding not the warning murmurs that are rising on the breeze.

It is history now, the story. We can picture that last night,
When they stood beside their horses, waiting for their foes and light,
Shouting for their missing comrades. Did they hesitate or care,
Though ten thousand angry warriors thus at once knew where they were?

While the evening shadows lingered, three were asked to gallop back;
Through the hordes of Matabele that were coming up the track;
They must try to reach the column—tell to Forbes that all were done
If some succour did not reach them ere the rising of the sun.

It was a gallant thing to do, a hard and desperate ride—

The foe were all along the route and road on every side—

But 'twas a last, an only chance, so each man leapt to horse,

With cheery cry and quick good-bye they galloped down the course.

How they escaped being seized and shot is marvellous to think,

But safe and sound they crossed the ground and reached the river's brink;

And the scene that lay before them would have chilled the bravest blood:

The stream was rushing o'er its banks, a roaring, raging flood.

No time to pause—from out the jaws of death they just had sped;

To turn and stand meant death on land, as well be drowned instead—

And so they urged their weary steeds into the broiling foam,

With failing strength they gained at length the further shore—and home.

Their comrades listen to their tale like to a fearful dream;

For the river still is rising, and none may cross the stream.

"Surely," cried Forbes, "some will escape! They will not all be shot?"

The scout replied, "Where you find *one* is where you'll find the lot."

And so the weary hours went by. Oh! what a bitter fact,

To be so near with willing hands, and powerless to act.

There was a hush through Forbes' camp, no cry, no sound of mirth,

For comrades dear were passing near their long last night on earth.

And the sun came forth in splendour and shed its lustre round,

Infusing life in everything that springeth from the ground;

It shone on a little band of men that fast grew less and less,

And it shone on a patch of glory that God will ever bless.

No mortal tongue can ever say what happened to them then,

But the natives speak in wonder of those great and glorious men;

They saw their time on earth had come, they knew they had to go,

So hand in hand and back to back they faced their savage foe.

A foe, armed, mind, with rifles, not alone with spears
and knives,
With bitter losses to avenge, and friends' and
brothers' lives;
Who saw in death but loss of breath and life
among their gods.
Who would have thought they could have fought
amidst such fearful odds?

But long the battle lasted, and one by one they
fell,
And how they kept that foe at bay not one is left
to tell;
We know they dared not "rush" them, and not
till *all* were dead
Can a Matabele warrior say he touched a white
man's head.

Why did those warriors stand and pause while
comrades fell around?
They only had to run across a piece of open
ground,
To club their rifles in their hands and swing them
through the air,
And that last stand of Wilson's band were ended
then and there.

Have you who read these lines e'er seen a wounded
stag at bay,
Turn on the dogs that harass him, and scatter
them away?
With glaring eyes and foaming mouth he charges
undismayed,
And the dogs sneak from him barking, waiting
surely, but afraid.

How looked they then, this band of men, sur-
rounded and forlorn,
As the night gave way to the bright'ning grey of
this sad and fatal morn?
I guess they sent a prayer to God to comfort those
who mourned,
And died where they stood for their country's good
at the hands of a race they scorned.

There was no cry—to horse and fly! No thought
of self—for why?
There were wounded comrades with them, and if
one, then all must die.
No grander act is possible for mortal man to do,
Than to defend a fallen friend, and die beside him,
too.

And so each hero played his part with grim and
fierce disdain,
And only laid his weapon down when struck
through breast or brain;
And many a dusky warrior is lying on that plain!
Whom the threats of Lobengula cannot ever rouse
again.

At length they all are gone, but one who leans
upon a mound,
And he takes the loaded weapons from the dead
that lie around;
His—badly hit—but hard as grit. Methinks I
hear him call:
"Come on, you curs, and tell the world how you
have beat us all."

And the men of Forbes' column, waiting by Shan-
gani's shore,
Heard at length the firing slacken—one shot—and
then no more;
They hope and pray some will escape. They hope
and pray in vain;
The men of Wilson's party will be never seen
again.

LORD GRANVILLE GORDON.

From "The Legend of Birse,"
By permission of the Author.

THE FAIRY QUEEN.

ME mother often spoke to me,
"Corney, me boy," siz she,
"There's luck in store for you agra!
You've been so kind to me!
Down be the rath in Reilly's Park
They say that Larry Shawn,
That's gone away across the say,
Once cotch a Leprechawn.

"He grabbed him by the scruff so hard,
The little crather swore,
That if bowld Larry'd let him go,
He should be poor no more!
'Just look behind ye, Larry dear,'
Screeched out the chokin' elf,
'There's hapes of goold in buckets there,
It's all for Larry's self!

If Larry lets the little man
Go free again, he'll be
No longer poor, but rich an' great!
So Larry let him free.
Some say he carried home the goold
An' hid it in the ayes,
But some say when the elf was gone
'Twas turned to withered laves.

"If Larry cotch a Leprechawn,"
Me mother then 'ed cry,
"Why you may ketch a fairy queen,
Ma banchal, by an' by!"
Near Balligarry now she sleeps,
Where great O'Brien bled,
And often since I took a thought
Of what me mother said.

At last I came to Dublin town,
 To thry an' sell some pigs,
 And maybe then I didn't cut
 A quare owld shine of rigs.
 I sowld me pigs for forty pound,
 For they wor clane an' fat,
 An' thin we hadn't American mate,
 So they wor chape at that !

"Well now," sez I, "me pocket's full,
 I'll not go home just yit,
 I'll take a twist up thro' the town
 An' thrate meself a bit."
 I mosey'd round to Sackville Sthreet,
 When starin' round me best,
 I seen a darlin' colleen there,
 Most beautifully dhressed.

A posy in her Leghorn hat,
 An' round her neck a ruff
 Of black cock's feathers, jacket too,
 Of raal expensive stuff.
 A silver ferruled umberell'
 In hand with yalla kid,
 An' thro' a great big hairy muff
 Her other hand was hid.

O like a sweet come-all-ye, in
 A waltzin' swing, she swep'
 The toepath, with the music of
 Her silken skirt, an' step.
 To see her turn the corner, thro'
 The lamplight comin' down,
 You'd think she owned the freehowld of
 That part of Dublin town !

You'd think she owned the sky above,
 Its moon with all the stars,
 The thraffic in the streets below,
 Their thrams, an' carts, an' cars !
 You'd think that she was landlady
 Of all that she could see,
 An' faith regardin' of meself,
 She made her own of me !

"O Corney, is it you ?" siz she,
 An' up to me she came,
 I took a start, to hear her there
 Pronouncin' out me name ;
 "O Corney, there ye are !" siz she,
 Wid raal familiar smile,
 An' thin, begor, she took me arm,
 Most coaxingly the while.

I fluttered like a butterfly,
 That's born the first of May,
 With pride, as if I had the right
 Handside, the Judgment Day !
 I felt as airy as a lark that
 Skies it from the ground,
 To think she'd walk wid me, poor chap,
 Wid only forty pound !

She took me arm, an' thrapsed wid me
 All down be Sackville Sthreet,
 An' colleens beautifully dhressed,
 In twos and threes we meet ;
 An' men that grinned a greenish grin
 Of envy from their eye,
 To see me wid that lady grand,
 Like paycock marchin' by.

Till, comin' to a lamp, I turned,
 An' gazed into her eyes,
 Me heart that minute took me throat,
 Wid lump of glad surprise.
 Siz I, "Me jewel, thim two eyes
 Are sparklin' awful keen ;
 I'm sure," siz I, "I've come across
 Me mother's Fairy Queen !"

"O Corney, yis," siz she, "I am
 A Fairy Queen," siz she,
 "An' I can make yer fortune now,
 If you'll just come with me."
 Wid that, I ups and says, "Of course !"
 As bowld as I could spake,
 "An' sure I will, me darlin', if
 It's only for your sake."

Well, whin we passed the statues white
 Up to O'Connell Bridge,
 The Fairy Queen smiled up at me,
 An' gev a knowin' nudge.
 "Corney !" siz she, "I want a dhrink !"
 "Do ye, me dear ?" siz I,
 An' on the minute, faith I felt
 Meself was shockin' dhry.

Well, thin she brought me coorsin' off,
 Down be the Liffey's walls,
 An' up a narra gloomy sthreet,
 Up to a Palace Halls !
 An' there they wor, all splendid lit.
 "Come in, me love," siz she,
 I thought me heart 'ed break, to hear
 Her spake so kind to me !

Well, in we wint, an' down we sat,
 Behind a marvel schreen,
 An' there we dhrank, of drink galore,
 Me an' the Fairy Queen.
 She spoke by alphabetic signs,
 Siz she, "We'll have J.J.,
 An' whin we swalley'd that," siz she,
 "L.L. is raal O.K."

We tossed them off like milk. Siz she,
 "At these we needn't stick,
 D.W.D.'s a quench, you'll find,
 A.I., an' up to Dick !"
 Well, thin she left the alphabet,
 An' flyin' to the sky,
 "The Three Star Brand's the best," siz she,
 "To sparkle up your eye."

Thin, "Here!" siz she, "just taste Owld Tom."

But, augh! again me grain
It wint! Siz she, "It's mum's the word,
We'll cure it wid champagne!"

I never drank such sortin's of
The drink in all me life;

Signs on it in the mornin' me
Digestion was at strife!

At last, we qualified our drooth,
An' up she got. Siz she,
"We'll just retire to private life,
So, Corney, come wid me."

But just before I stood to go,
I siz, quite aisy, "Miss,
You might bestow poor Corney K.
One little, simple kiss."

"Ah! Corney, tibbey, sure," said she,
"Two, if ye like, ye thrush!"

O have ye seen the blackberries
Upon the brambly bush?
The Johnny Magory still is bright,
Whin all the flowers are dead—
Her hair was like the blackberries!
Her dhress, Magory red!

O have you ever sauntered out
Upon a winther's night,
Whin the crispy frost is on the ground,
An' all the stars are bright?
Then have you bent your awestruck gaze
There, up against the skies?
The stars are very bright, you think—
Well, thim was just her eyes!

Were you ever down at the strawberry beds,
An' seen them dhrowned in chrame?
Well, that was her complexion, and
Her teeth wor shockin' white!
An' the music of her laughin' chaff
Was like a beggar's dhrame,
Whin he hears the silver jingle, and
His rags are out of sight!

I thought the dhrop of dhrink was free,
But throth, I had to pay!
I thought it quare, but then I thought
It was, the fairy's way.
"Howld on!" siz I, "she's thyrin' me,
Have I an open heart,
Before she makes me fortune?" So,
Begor! I took a start

Of reckless generosity,
An' hung me money round;
'Twas scattered on the table! in
Her lap an' on the ground!
I seen it glittin' in the air,
Before me wondherin' eyes,
Like little yalla breasted imps,
All dhroppin' from the skies!

O then I knew that it was threw,
She was a Fairy Queen.
The goold came dhroppin' whoppin'! hoppin'!

The like was never seen!
I gave a whippin' screech of joy!
Whin, wid a sudden whack,
Some hidden wizard riz his wand,
An' sthruck me from the back.
Down came the clout upon the brain,
An' froze me senses quite,
An' over all me joy at once
There shot the darkest night!

I knew no more, till I awoke,
An' found meself alone.
I thrust me hand to grasp me purse—
Me forty pounds wor gone!
O then, with awful cursin', if

I didn't raise the scenes!
"Bad luck!" siz I, "to Leprechawns,
Bad scan to Fairy Queens!
Bad luck to them that spreads abroad
Such shockin', lyin' tales;
Bad luck has me, that tears me hair,
An' forty pounds bewails!"
Wid that, I see a man come up
A dark arch, marchin' thro',
As if he hadn't any work
Particular to do.

He measured me wid selfish eye,
As cat regards a rat,
An' when he spoke, begor I found,
'Twas just his price at that!
Siz he, "What's all this squealin' for?
What makes ye bawl?" siz he;
Siz he, "I'm a dissective, so
You'll have to come wid me!"
Siz he, "Yer shouts wor almost loud
Enough to crack the delph!
An' in the mornin' I must bring
Ye up before himself!"

"Arrah! What for?" siz I, an' thin
I towld him all me woe,
An' how I woke, an' found meself
Asleep, an' lyin' low.
I towld him of the whipster that
Had whipped me forty pound,
An' left me lyin' fast asleep,
In gutter, on the ground.
Then leerin' like, he turned and siz,
"You're a nice boy! complate!
To go wid Fairy Queens like that,
An' losé yer purse so nate.
Corney!" siz he, "go home!" siz he,
"She might have sarved ye worse;
I'll thry mē best to ketch the Fay,
An' get you back yer purse.
But look! don't shout like that again,
It was a shockin' shout,
It sthruck me 'twas a house a-fire!
You riz up such a rout.

"I thought you'd wake me wife! She sleeps
 Down in a churchyard near!"
 Wid that the dark disiective turned,
 An' bursted in a tear!
 I dhribbled out a few myself,
 Me brow wid sham: I bint,
 An' like a lamb, from slaughter slow,
 Wid totherin' steps I wint.
 But never, never from that day,
 Was any tidin' seen,
 Of me owld purse, me forty pound,
 Or of me Fairy Queen!

Then, whin I thought of Norah's wrath,
 An' what a power she'd say,
 Me fine black hair riz on me skull,
 An' grew all grizzle grey!
 O never more to Dublin town
 I'll come to sell me pigs!
 I walk a melancholy man,
 Like one that's got the jigs;
 An' in the town of Limerick, if
 You ever chance to meet
 A haggard man wid battered hat
 Come sthridin' down the street,
 An' if he stops by fits and starts,
 An' stares at nothin' keen,
 Say, "There goes Corney, look, he's mad!
 He cotch a Fairy Queen."
 An' if you chance in Sackville Streeet,
 Or any other way,
 To meet, all beautifully drest,
 A lovely colleen gay;

An' if she happens on the name,
 That you wor christened by,
 An' laughs, as if she knew ye,
 With a 'cute acquaintance eye,
 Or if she takes yer arm, and siz
 That she's a Fairy Queen,
 Start back in horror, shout aloud,
 "O woman, am I green?"
 Am I before a doctor's shop,
 Where coloured bottles be?
 Is there a green light on my face,
 That you should spake to me?
 Go home, O Fairy Queen, go home!
 At once, an' holus bolus,
 Remimber Corney Keegan's purse,
 An' think of the Dublin Polus."

W. THEODORE PARKES.

From "The Spook Ballads"
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SHARP PRACTICE.

"It's all very well to report a man, and make minutes about him, and all that sorter thing," said John Brough, A.K. 247, as he went down Great Bulky Street, beating his white-gloved hands together, and rolling his eyes about in all directions. "A man can't be all hyes, like a peacock, and looking everywhere at once. Twenty shillings a week ain't much, you know, is it, for board and lodging, and washing, and the missus, and the young 'uns? Here, just get out o' that, now, will yer?"

"I ain't in nobody's way, am I?"

"Yes, you are; so go on! That there barrer o' yourn's been getting bigger every week, and how's carriges to draw up if you're here?"

This bit of fencing took place between P.C. Brough and a man with an apple barrow—the fruit vendor going off grumbling, and P.C. on the look out for workers of mischief against the laws of Her Sovereign Majesty the Queen. He was not a perfect man, John Brough: he was a good officer, and worked hard for his pay; but he was not perfect, and he knew it. In earlier days, before Mrs. Brough agreed to rest in future upon his manly breast, he had been seen more than once to steal up from areas, and close the gate very carefully after him—of course returning from voyages of investigation and examination of locks, bolts, and bars for the protection of Her Majesty's liege subjects.

Of course he had on these occasions tried the coal-cellar, and looked into the dustbin. But why was a gentle cough heard, and a door closed softly when John came up? and, again, why bulged those pockets, to the distortion of the symmetry of his manly form—the knobblefying of his neat blue uniform?

It is a very old joke to accuse policemen of partiality for cooks; but the charge is none the less true, and the great Force need not blush. Have not the greatest generals and statesmen found solace in the society of the other sex?

But John was now a married man, and devoted himself most strongly to his profession. Evil-doers feared him, and many were the scoundrels he had hauled off to prison, with penal results. It was not often that he interfered with applewomen. His orders were to keep the way clear; but, as John said, "We must all live, and selling apples is honest—as honest as selling tea and sugar—honester, for you can't adulterate your apples, though you may boil an orange." But John was now under a cloud, and he did interfere with apple men and women; "chivied" small boys; cuffed one who had "cut behind" a cab and nearly been run over; frowned severely at a fusee seller; scowled at a patchouli native in cummerbund, till the coffee-coloured Hindoo shivered in his shoes, and smiled pathetically. John even had words

with an earl's coachman, and moved him on in spite of the coronet upon his panel and the dashing bays.

For John was under a cloud. Mysterious robberies had been taking place on his beat, and, though he had done his best to catch the members of the gang, they had been too much for him, and the robberies went on.

Now this was very galling to a man who had set his mind upon rising in life. Blue was very well, but John wanted to wear black, with silk facings. P.C. was decent; sergeant was better; but inspector, and then superintendent—those were the goals that John Brough wished to reach in the race of life; and now, instead of going forward, his movements were retrograde; he was threatened with minutes and reports, and all because of the scoundrels who had been too much for him.

"I'll be down upon them, though, one of these days," said John. "I'll put salt on some of your tails, my pretty gaol-birds. It's 'ware hawk with you, so I tell you, my fine fellows."

So he went on, up and down, down and up, and had nothing to report at last.

And the robberies went on. A carpet-bag was taken from a cab in motion. Next day a shawl and a carriage-timepiece were stolen as the barouche stood at a fashionable milliner's door. The disturbance about that was hardly over, when a boy was hustled, and a valuable parcel wrested from his hands. Again, a page was bonneted, and a pet dog and a mother-of-pearl opera-glass taken from his encircling arms.

John Brough was in despair.

Another day: Great-coat and umbrella from the front hall of Lord Rubblemade's town mansion, in Upper Crook Street; two umbrellas from No. 24 in the same street, and a roll of carpet from the big draper's round the corner.

John had a sharp lecture from the inspector, and he went again upon his beat, horribly wroth.

"If I'd only been by that shop-door, I could have nailed them," said John, angrily; "but a man can't be everywhere at once. I'll have them, though, next time, hang me if I don't! or else I'll leave the Force."

He was very busy that day, and took up one man on suspicion; but only got snubbed for his pains:

"I shall be too many for them yet," said John, as he swung leisurely down a street. Every dog has his day, watch-dogs as well as mongrels, a-running about and doing mischief; but when I do get hold, why then—"

He paused before an orange-woman who was encroaching upon the pavement, and, after warning her off, began to ponder on her appearance. Some one must have committed these robberies, and why not she as well as anybody else? She was bulky, and had a habit of sitting in a bushel-basket packed with her legs under her, to keep her warm; her

bonnet was very much crushed, and her plaid shawl all awry—all of which proved nothing; but they might be found to be associated in some way with the late robberies. It was astonishing what great things sometimes grew out of small, as the detective had often shown.

John Brough could not make the sides of the puzzle fit, so he moved on himself.

"Ah! now that was more likely. An organ-grinder. Hum! Always loitering about and turning that handle—what opportunities for thinking out villainy! But no, it would not do. He couldn't take up Guiseppe on suspicion; so the man ground out the march from 'Faust' like so much musical meal to be blown away upon the wind, the sounds buzzing in John Brough's ears, even when he was out of sight.

"I'll have 'em yet,—I'll have 'em yet," said John, as he chewed the cud of his disappointment, and thought of his inspector's words; but his business was very slack, the people were awfully well-behaved, and it was very disappointing.

A cab rattled by, laden with luggage; but no scoundrel was dislodging a portmanteau; and he—John Brough—could not run after that cab all the way to the Great Northern to see if it arrived there safe. It was not reasonable, and would be horribly wanting in dignity.

How his head worked! How he beat together his gloves, in which his fingers itched to get at crime, or longed to lay hold of his truncheon, and hit at something hard, very hard!

Up and down, here and there; but nothing on the wing. Not even a row between somebody's coachman and a cabby; not even a horse down; all was peace when he wanted war—war to the truncheon.

It was enough to make any policeman sigh, and he sighed accordingly. Ah! if some daring scoundrel would only dash a brick through one of those great panes of glass, and seize handfuls of the glorious jewels therein! With what a feeling of exquisite delight he could bring down his truncheon upon the evil-doer's arm, and make him drop the treasure, which would fly scintillating all over the pavement; and then, with the fellow's cuff tightly held, the jewels gathered and placed in, his, John Brough's, pocket, how he could proudly march the thief off, enter the charge, and deposit the culprit like so much honey which he had gathered safely in a cell!

Ah, and, at the court next day! Yes, he would shine there as the active and intelligent officer. The jeweller would, of course, come down handsome, and it would be a step towards promotion. Yes, if such an attempt were only made, and he was at hand to stay it! What a crack at the gang it would be—if it were not a castle in the air.

P.C. Brough beat his gloves together and sighed—sighed deeply.

"I was on the look-out when that last carriage

robbery came off, and I'd almost go so far as to swear that I saw that roll of carpet perfectly safe ten minutes before it was stolen. Though it couldn't have been safe, or it wouldn't have been taken. Ah! I shall have 'em yet."

"Now then, Bobby, give's a lift with this here, there's a good 'un."

John Brough had been slowly approaching the corner of a great cheesemonger's shop, at one end of which stood a light cart, with the tail-board down, and an ordinary-looking man was trying to lift a large firkin, its fellow being already in the cart.

"Heavy!" said P.C. Brough.

"Out an' out," said the man.

John Brough was naturally good-natured. He knew, too, the value of aid in a row: how often the law was glad to appeal to a civilian for help in the capture of some ugly customer. So, without a moment's hesitation, he slipped off his gloves, seized one end of the little barrel, and with a swing it was safely deposited in the cart.

"A little furdur, old un," said the man; now, then, both together. There's summat else to come."

A vigorous push sent the firkin right forward beside the other.

"Now this here," said the man, "and then there's the price of a pint," as he stepped up to an egg-box lying close under the cheesemonger's window.

"All right," said John; "but just tell your people as it ain't safe to have these things out like they do; there's been a good many robberies about."

"Well, I told our foreman as it wa'n't safe," said the man; but he called me a fool for my pains. Now, then."

John Brough pocketed the twopence offered to him, put his fingers under one end of the straw-packed case, the man got his under the other; the box was rested on the tail of the cart, leisurely thrust in, the tail-board rattled up, pins and chains secured, the man climbed in, a mutual nod of good-fellowship was exchanged, the reins were shaken, the horse flicked, and away it rattled, while P.C. Brough slowly replaced his gloves, looked eagerly round for scoundrels, and went on his way.

"Luck's dead against me," he said, "dead as dead, but I'll have 'em yet. If some one would only do something. If I'd had any luck at all, I should have nobbled some one after them butter-kogs. Ah! nothing never falls in my way."

All through the afternoon, like a law-preserving and intelligent officer, did P. C. Brough wander about his beat, longing to get a shot at some rascal or another; but everything was quieter than usual, and the time for relief coming he returned to the station.

"Another robbery on your beat this afternoon, Brough," said the inspector; "strange thing, most mysterious! But it must be stopped. We can't go on like this. I must put another man on."

"No, sir, don't, please. I'm down on 'em first chance," said Brough; "but what is it this time—another timepiece out of a carriage?"

"No, a——"

"Not a great-coat from a hall?"

"No, a shop-door robbery."

"And I told 'em to be careful about them there rolls of carpet."

"I don't want to be harsh," said the inspector; "and I suppose you were watched out of the way. A man can't be everywhere at once, nor yet be all eyes, as the ratepayers and the press seem to think."

"What was it this time, sir?"

"Oh, a very daring affair: butter firkins and egg-chests just delivered from a railway van. Two firkins and a chest taken from the cheesemonger's door directly after."

"Were they outside the shop, sir?" said Brough, rubbing his gloves softly together.

"Yes, outside at Chedderby's. The fellows must have had a cart. I'll put on a couple of plain clothes men, for this sort of thing must be stopped. The Colonel will be furious."

"They're sharp uns and no mistake," said John Brough, with a peculiar look of his eye; and then, being dismissed, he slowly returned to his lodgings, grinding his teeth, doubling his fists, and biting a bit of straw into the smallest possible fragments.

"It won't do to say how I've been sold," he muttered at last, as he sat down to the tea-table, "for I have been sold and no mistake. Looked as innocent as a lamb, he did, and me not to see as he was the lamb of black sheep. And me, after eight years in the Force, not to have the gumption to take a note of the name upon the cart!"

John Brough might have spared himself all trouble about that, for the name had been most carefully removed.

"But please the pigs," said John, "I'll have some of them yet."

GEO. MANVILLE FENN.

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THE DEMON SHIP.

'Twas off the Wash—the sun went down—the sea looked black and grim,
For stormy clouds, with murky fleece, were mustering at the brim;
Titanic shades! enormous gloom!—as if the solid night
Of Erebus rose suddenly to seize upon the light!
It was a time for mariners to bear a wary eye,
With such a dark conspiracy between the sea and sky!

Down went my helm—closed reefed—the tack held
firmly in my hand—
With ballast snug—I put about, and scudded for
the land.
Loud hissed the sea beneath her lee—my little
boat flew fast,
But faster still the rushing storm came borne upon
the blast.
Lord! what a roaring hurricane beset the straining
sail!
What furious sleet, with level drift, and fierce
assaults of hail!
What darksome caverns yawned before! what
jagged steps behind!
Like battle steeds, with foamy waves, wild tossing
in the wind!

Each after each sank down astern, exhausted in
the chase,
But where it sank another rose and galloped in its
place;
As black as night—they turned to white, and cast
against the clouds
A snowy sheet, as if each surge upturned a sailor's
shroud;
Still flew my boat, alas! alas! her course was
nearly run!
Beyond yon fatal billow rose—ten billows heaped
in one!
With fearful speed the dreary mass came rolling,
rolling fast,
As if the scooping sea contained one only wave at
last!

Still on it came, with horrid roar, a swift, pursuing
grave:
It seemed as though some cloud had turned its
hugeness to a wave!
It's briny sleet began to beat beforehand in my
face—
I felt the seaward keel begin to climb its swelling
base!
I saw its alpine hoary head impending over
mine!
Another pulse—and down it rushed—an avalanche
of brine!
Brief pause had I on God to cry, or think of wife
and home;
The waters closed, and when I shrieked, I shrieked
below the foam!
Beyond that rush I have no hint of any after-deed,
For I was tossing on the wave as senseless as a
weed.

• • • • •

"Where am I?—in the breathing world, or in
the world of death?"
With sharp and sudden pang I drew another birth
of breath;

My eyes drank in a doubtful light, my ears a
doubtful sound—
And was that ship a *real* ship, whose tackle seemed
around?
A moon, as if the earthly moon, was shining up
aloft;
But were those beams the very beams that I had
seen so oft?
A face that mocked the human face before we
watched alone;
But were those eyes the eyes of man that looked
against my own?

Oh, never may the moon again disclose me such a
sight
As met my gaze, when first I looked, on that
accursed night!
I've seen a thousand horrid shapes begot of fierce
extremes
Of fever; and most frightful things have haunted
in my dreams—
Hyenas—cats—blood-loving bats—and apes with
hateful stare—
Pernicious snakes and shaggy bulls—the lion, and
she-bear—
Strong enemies, with Judas-looks of treachery and
spite—
Detested features hardly dimmed and banished by
the light!
Pale-sheeted ghosts, with gory locks, up-starting
from their tombs—
All phantasies and images that flit in midnight
glooms—
Hags, goblins, demons, lemurs, have made me all
aghast,
But nothing like that Grimy One who stood beside
the mast!

His cheeks were black—his brow was black—his
eyes and hair as dark;
His hand was black, and where it touched it left
a sable mark;
His throat was black, his vest the same, and when
I looked beneath,
His breast was black—all, all was black, except his
grinning teeth.
His sooty crew were like in hue, as black as *Afric's*
slaves!
Oh, horror! e'en the ship was black that ploughed
the inky waves!

"Alas!" I cried, "for love of truth and blessed
Mary's sake!
Where am I?—in what dreadful ship? upon what
dreadful lake?
What ship is that, so very grim, and black as any
coal?
It is Mahound, the Evil One, and he has gained
my soul!"

Oh, mother dear ! my tender nurse ! dear meadows
that beguiled

My happy days when I was yet a little sinless
child—

My mother dear—my native fields, I never more
shall see !

I'm sailing in the Devil's Ship, upon the Devil's
Sea !

Loud laughed that Sable Mariner, and boldly in
return

His sooty crew sent forth a laugh that rang from
stern to stern ;

A dozen pair of grimy cheeks were crumpled on
the nonce ;

As many sets of grinning teeth came shining out
at once ;

A dozen gloomy shapes at once enjoyed the merry
fit,

With shriek and yell, and oaths as well, like
Demons of the Pit.

They crowed their fill, and then the chief made
answer for the whole :

"Our skins," said he, "are black, ye see, because
we carry coal ;

You'll find your mother, sure enough, and see your
native fields—

For this here ship has picked you up—the *Mary
Ann* of Shields !"

THOMAS HOOD.

STOOD AT CLEAR.

"WHERE is Adams ?" that was the cry.

"Let us question him before he die."

Naught around in the night was seen
Save the glimmer of lamps where the crash had
been.

Right across the six-foot way,
One huge hulk, engine and tender lay.

While the wailing hiss of the steam took the air,
By fits, like the low, dull tone of despair.

But still above all rose that one clear cry—
"Speak to Adams before he die."

"Here," I said, "turn your lamps on me,"
And I laid Jim's head upon my knee.

"Jim, old mate," I said in his ear ;
"They will ask you a question—can you hear ?"

Then I saw through the grime that was on his face,
A white hue coming with slow, sure pace ;

And upon his brow, by the light of the lamp,
Other dew than the night's lay heavy and damp.

"Speak to him quick !" They bent and said,
"Did the distant signal stand at red ?"

Broken and slow came the words, with a moan,
"Stood—at—clear," and poor Jim was gone.

I turned my head away from the light
To hide the tears that were blinding my sight,

And pray'd from my heart to God that Jim
Might find heaven's signals clear to him.

ALEXANDER ANDERSON.

By permission of the Author.

A TRIPLET.

I AM, I really think, the most unlucky man on
earth ;

A triple sorrow haunts me, and has done so from
my birth.

My lot in life's a gloomy one, I think you will
agree ;

'Tis bad enough to be a twin—but I am one of
three !

No sooner were we born than Pa and Ma the
bounty claimed ;

I scarce can bear to think they did—it makes me
feel ashamed.

They got it, too, within a week, and spent it, I'll
be bound,

Upon themselves—at least, I know I never had
my pound.

Our childhood's days in ignorance were lamentably
spent,

Although I think we more than paid the taxes and
the rent ;

For we were shown as marvels, and—unless I'm
much deceived—

The smallest contributions were most thankfully
received.

We grew up hale and hearty—would we never had
been born !—

As like to one another as three peas, or ears of corn.
Between my brothers Ichabod, Abimelech, and me
No difference existed which the human eye could
see.

This likeness was the cause of dreadful suffering
and pain

To me in early life—it nearly broke my heart in
twain ;

For while my conduct as a youth was fervently
admired,

That of my fellow-triplets left a deal to be
desired.

I was amiable, and pious, too—good deeds were
my delight;
I practised all the virtues—some by day and some
by night;
Whilst Ichabod imbrued himself in crime, and, sad
to say,
Abimelech, when quite a lad, would rather swear
than pray.

Think of my horror and dismay when, in the Park
at noon,
An obvious burglar greeted me with, "Hullo, Ike,
old coon!"

He vanished. Suddenly my wrists were gripped
by Policeman X.—
"Young man, you are my prisoner on a charge of
forgin' cheques."

He ran me in, and locked me up, to moulder in a
cell,

The reason why he used me thus, alas! I know
too well.

He took me for Abimelech, my erring brother dear,
Who was "wanted" by the Bank of which he'd
been the chief cashier.

Next morn the magistrate remarked, "This is a sad
mistake,

Though natural enough, I much regret it for your
sake;

But if you will permit me to advise you, I should
say,

Leave England for some other country, very far
away.

For if you go on living in this happy sea-girt isle,
Although your conduct (like my own) be pure and
free from guile,

Your likeness to these sinful men, your brothers
twain, will lead,

I fear, to very serious inconveniences indeed."

I took the hint, and sailed next day for distant
Owhyhee—

As might have been expected, I was cast away at
sea.

A pirate lugger picked me up, and—dreadful to
relate—

Abimelech her captain was, and Ichabod her mate.

I loved them and they tempted me. To join them
I agreed,

Forsook the path of virtue, and did many a ghastly
deed.

For seven years I wallowed in my fellow-creatures'
gore,

And then gave up the business, to settle down on
shore.

My brothers on retiring from the buccaneering
trade,

In which, I'm bound to say, colossal fortunes they
had made,

Renounced their wicked courses, married young
and lovely wives,
Went to church three times on Sundays, and led
sanctimonious lives.

As for me—I somehow drifted into vieness past
belief,

Earned unsavoury distinction as a drunkard and
a thief;

E'en in crime, ill-luck pursued me: I became
extremely poor,

And was finally compelled to beg my bread from
door to door.

I'm deep down in the social scale; no lower can I
sink.

Upon the whole, experience induces me to think
That virtue is not lucrative, and honesty's all
fudge—

For Ichabod's a Bishop—and Abimelech's a Judge!

W. BEATTY-KINGSTON.

From "My Hansom Lays."

By permission of the Author.

SCENE FROM "RICHARD SAVAGE."

RICHARD SAVAGE. LORD TYRCONNEL.

MRS. BRETT.

SCENE.—*Mrs. Brett's Boudoir.*

LORD TYRCONNEL and MRS. BRETT discovered.

LORD T. This conduct, my cousin, is reprehensible. You have proved yourself the most unnatural of mothers, incapable alike of affection and pity.

MRS. B. That I have never loved the son of Lord Rivers you know full well.

LORD T. True; and the deception you practised upon your guilty partner in this grave scandal makes you doubly guilty.

MRS. B. He never wavered in his belief that the boy was dead.

LORD T. And in that belief you allowed him to die; thus depriving the boy of that provision which might otherwise have been made for his future. Nay more, your inhuman conduct would have condemned him to a life of ignorance as well as poverty, but for my intervention. The expenses of his education I have borne most willingly; but now, since the poor woman who passed for his mother is no more, it is but just that he should learn the secret of his birth, and claim your affection as his mother.

MRS. B. I forbid it. By everything that is solemn I forbid it!

LORD T. Have you no pity for your own flesh and blood? Cannot you look with compassion

upon the child you have wronged, who has never known a mother's love?

Mrs. B. His father should have married me, sir!

Lord T. Your guilty wiles involved him sufficiently. Let us not revile the dead.

Mrs. B. It is against the living that I level my scorn. To his last hour the boy shall be kept in ignorance of his parentage.

Lord T. Enough, enough! If then you refuse to repair this grievous wrong, I charge you to acquaint me with his whereabouts, so that he may be provided for in a manner suitable to his station.

Mrs. B. That cannot be. I have already placed him beyond your reach.

Lord T. Where is he?

Mrs. B. I decline to answer.

Lord T. Madam, I insist.

Mrs. B. My Lord, you cannot compel me.

Lord T. I repeat, where is he?

Mrs. B. Ha, ha, ha! Ask me rather *what* he is! A poor shoemaker's drudge—a London apprentice—

Lord T. [*Moving to L.H.*] Thanks for the information. The boy shall be found, and whatever harm may threaten him at your hands, I will engage to circumvent. So then, Madam, justice shall enter the lists against iniquity! [*Exit L.D.*]

Mrs. B. But the victory will be mine! I flatter myself it will cost my cousin some pains to pursue his search among all the shoemakers' apprentices of the town. From his cradle I have never seen the boy, but his late nurse executed my utmost wishes. Thus, lowly and obscure he shall ever remain, nor know that he had a countess for his mother, and a peer of the realm for his father.

Enter RICHARD SAVAGE through casement.

Sav. Madam!

Mrs. B. This intrusion?

Sav. One instant, I pray you. Had I not been repulsed by your servants at the door, I should not have hazarded an entrance by the window. But when you have learned the purport of my errand, you will doubtless condone my rashness.

Mrs. B. What is your business?

Sav. I believe I am addressing Mrs. Brett, formerly the Countess of Macclesfield?

Mrs. B. Well?

Sav. In that case I am charged with a mission in which you are especially interested, I trust we are alone?

Mrs. B. Certainly.

Sav. Then I'll to my business at once. It's a curious case, but very interesting. The fact is, a friend of mine has lately come into the possession of some letters bearing your name and in your handwriting. The letters I speak of were the property of a poor woman, who left them, with her other effects, to her surviving son—my school-

fellow and friend—who, being in present distress, has charged me to restore them to their author, and to acquaint you with his position.

Mrs. B. I do not understand you.

Sav. [*Produces a number of letters.*] These are the letters. But I am forbidden to part with them except under certain conditions.

Mrs. B. You want money?

Sav. I have said my friend was in distress.

Mrs. B. Well, if the letters are genuine, and of value to me, he shall be rewarded. Let me examine them.

Sav. [*Places the letters in her hands.*] I doubt not, Madam, you will instantly discover their worth.

Mrs. B. [*After looking at them.*] You are an intelligent messenger, and 'tis well that he of whom you speak has not himself sought this interview.

Sav. But why?

Mrs. B. Because he would have merited my personal hate the more. Wretch! Does he think that by uprooting a family secret he can claim aught at my hands; that his seeming threat to malign me in the eyes of the world may be bartered by gold?

Sav. I pray you, Madam, he has no such intentions.

Mrs. B. What do you know? Have you, too, made yourself familiar with the purport of these letters?

Sav. My friend has himself acquainted me with the history of his wrongs.

Mrs. B. What? Begone, sir, nor darken my door again, either on his behalf, or upon your own.

Sav. Nay, Madam, think of what you do. Listen, he has told me all. How for years he centred his affection upon one who was not his mother; how he wasted prayers, filial obedience, and youthful tenderness upon a hired nurse; receiving no more than common womanly kindness, in place of a mother's love, in return. Oh! 'twas a base deception—

Mrs. B. A deception, sir!

Sav. Worse, Madam, 'twas a crime. I have heard of men publishing a false report of their death, so that they might witness how shallow was the grief poured by relatives over their coffin. But no grief was e'er more genuine, yet so cruelly misapplied, as when my friend followed his mock mother to the grave, while she who had given him birth remained aloof, unknown. Oh! 'twas hard to bear when he discovered this; and but for me he might have died—he might have died.

Mrs. B. You speak in riddles, boy; I do not understand you.

Sav. But these papers prove that you are his mother!

Mrs. B. I?—

Sav. Nay, don't feign to deny it, for they are Truth itself. See, your own handwriting and signature. What is more, I have here another

document, left by this poor woman, in which she openly confesses the fraud. [*Produces a letter which he returns to his pocket.*]

Mrs. B. Fool! The whole story is a base fabrication.

Sav. Never deceive yourself, Madam; for as truly as there is a Heaven above, and justice on earth, you have wronged your own flesh and blood in this boy.

Mrs. B. And pray what interest have you in taking his part?

Sav. That I might induce you to admit him into your presence, to kneel before you, to ask your blessing; that he might call you Mother.

Mrs. B. Never!

Sav. Oh!

Mrs. B. Let him but come near me, and he shall learn how much I hate him.

Sav. Oh, misery!

Mrs. B. This message you may take to him. And now begone, lest I call the servants to remove you.

Sav. Stay, Madam. I swore I would force myself into your presence, and here I stand; nor will I quit the threshold unless you promise to make this son of yours some restitution.

Mrs. B. Go, I command you go! He has no claim upon me, and those papers are a forgery.

Sav. [*Picks them up.*] Forgeries or not, they shall never be applied to your disadvantage. [*Tears them up.*] See, the proofs are destroyed, but not so the link that binds our hearts together.

Mrs. B. What do you say! You are mad!

Sav. No, I am not mad, though your cruelty has well-nigh made me so. Listen, this boy of whom I speak is near you at this moment. His story is mine; his distresses are mine; his sympathies are mine; his wrongs have lacerated my heart; in short, he has no existence save in myself—for I am that boy, and you are my mother.

Mrs. B. [*Kneels and kisses her hand. Snatching her hand away from him.*] What! And you have dared—

Sav. Yes; the son has dared to gain admittance to his mother! Nay! in pity do not spurn me. Now that I have found you, I not only forgive, but bless and pray for you, and will love you dearly all my days. I ask not for wealth, power, or position. I come but for the natural recognition of my claims. Regard me, therefore, in that relationship wherein I stand. From this day forth let me call myself your son.

Mrs. B. Begone, I repeat, begone! I am not your mother; you are no son of mine.

Sav. Unnatural mother, but mother still. Have you no heart?

Mrs. B. No heart for you, since your father gave no love to me.

Sav. Once more, let me entreat you—

Mrs. B. Enough of this. [*Moves to L.D.*]

Sav. Stay. Spare me that further insult. I will go. But hear me. Should there come a time when you stand in need of that same sympathy and love which you now refuse to me, remember, I will not deny myself your son, though to-day you have forgotten that you are my mother. Farewell!

[*Exit C.D.*]

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

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THE STATUE OF JUSTICE.

It stands in the centre of Florence,
Surveying that point where the street
They call Tornabuoni emerges

The sunny Lung' Arno to meet,
Not far from the Palace of Strozzi
(Which dwarfs every dwelling-place near,
And where bouquets laid out on the basement
Are bartered uncommonly dear!).

And there stands in an angle behind
What is now but a strangers' hotel,
Yet a house one may see in a moment
Has more than one story to tell;
Whose windows look up to the Statue
With helmet, with sword, and with scales,
While round in the blue, peradventure,
A pigeon or jackdaw there sails.

It was here, long ago, that a Countess
(Precisely her name I forget)
One day at her toilet was tempted
To language of anger and threat;
For a necklace of pearls which she valued
At some quite incredible price,
Was not at her bidding forthcoming,
Although she had asked for it twice!

She had come very late from a ball,
And the dress she elected to wear
She found, when she woke, where she left it,—
Flung over the back of a chair;
But the necklace she laid on the table,
Not locking it up in its case,—
The necklace was gone in the morning,
Where, was not so easy to trace!

But when they had ransacked the house
From the basement right up to the top,
And again from the top to the basement,
A hint some one ventured to drop,
Which very soon grew to a charge
(To its victim's perdition and grief)
How a blush on the kitchenmaid's cheek
Clearly pointed her out as the thief.

When the loss of the pearls was discovered
Her face had grown guiltily red,
And she gazed on the flags at her feet,
And she nothing suggested, they said.

She was friendless, defenceless, an orphan,
And kept for the work of a drudge,
So what chance of redress she possessed
In the matter, I leave you to judge!

But the Countess, with kindly intention,
Abjured her: "Confess and restore!"
And the girl from the depth of her heart
In her terror protested and swore
She would if she could, but she couldn't,
Whatever they threatened,—no less,—
She had nothing, so nothing in truth
She could either restore or confess.

So next, for formality's sake,
The case was referred to the Court
Of Justice (so-called), which decided
To cut it with contumely short;
For morals sat loosely, and witness
Was easily bartered for gold,
And the Judge was a pig-headed rogue
Who believed the first thing he was told.

"Her guilt is as patent as daylight,"
He said, and the fact of denial
Did the prisoner more damage than good
In this farce that did duty for trial;
So they doomed her to death,—although, mark
you,
The necklace remained unrecovered,
No effort of Count or of Countess
Its whereabouts having discovered!

But, led to her death past the Statue
Of Justice, she paused to exclaim:
"Oh, Justice! what terrible errors
Men sometimes commit in thy name!"
(In language and gesture forestalling
Another far greater than she,
Who spake before Liberty's image
Her famous apostrophe.)

But Justice up there in the sunlight,
Whatever she noticed or heard,
Stood straight with her sword and her balance,
And answered to never a word.
Did the scales just vibrate? Was this meant
As a sign to the watchers beneath?—
If so, there were none to believe,
And the maiden was led to her death!

But (here I would have you remark
On the irony dealt in by Fate)
A century later or more,
So the story goes on to relate,
Long after, when Countess and Count
All no less than the maiden were dust,
And the Judge had discovered how judgment
Springs up to condemn the unjust,

A mason at work on a ladder
(The Statue being under repair)
Discovered that necklace of pearls
In the scales Justice holds in the air!
Who carried it thither? A jackdaw,
Or magpie? Here History fails;
And I—I can tell you no more than—
The necklace was found in the scales!

H. L. CHILDE-FENBERTON.

*From "In a Tuscan Villa."
By permission of the Author.*

THE LONGSHORE BOATMAN.

DID I ever go out to a wreck, sir? Lord bless
you, I've often done that,
When the sea was a-rolling in mountains, and the
night just as black as your hat.
It's a tidy rough coast in the winter, when it blows
a nor'-easterly gale,
And whenever it gets a bit stormy, we always look
out for a sail.
But it's not very often, I tell you, that a slice o'
luck comes in our way:
I've stood here on the beach with my glasses, a-
peering out day after day,
With the tempest a-howling and roaring, and
everything promising fair
For a blooming good wreck on the sand, there; yet
never a ship I declare.
And if at odd seasons a vessel gets driven aground
on the shoals,
Ten to one it's some rotten old trader, or a brigantine
laden with coals—
Not a cargo worth twopence for salvage, or even a
tub that can float—
Why, it warn't worth the trouble and danger of
putting from shore in the boat.
Saving lives? Well of course we *do* save 'em; but
there isn't much gain to be got
From a pack of poor half-drowned creatures, who
haven't a cent 'mong the lot.
Oh, they're grateful enough—leastway sometimes
—but what is the vally o' thanks?
They don't buy no victuals nor liquor, and they
won't take 'em in at the banks.
I know there's some soft-hearted chaps—there's a
sight o' them down this here way—
Who save life for what they calls pity, and don't
seem to care for the pay.
But I don't set up for an 'ero—we boatmen, you
see, 's got to live;
And when they cry "Come out and help us!" I
answers straight—"What'll you give?"
Last winter we went to three vessels: the first was
from Norway, with wood;
The second a collier from Tynemouth—and neither
o' them was much good.

But of all the lamentable stories as ever you read of or heard,

Was what happened when me and my mates, sir, went out to the help o' the third.

'Twas the Saturday night afore Christmas, and the weather as bad as could be ;

With a gale blowing straight from the nor'ard, and raising a long hollow sea.

Now, me and a few other boatmen was taking a drink at the "Star" ;

It was nigh on to ten, and the landlord was thinking of closing the bar.

I was pretty well sober that evening, as also was two or three more ;

But the others was more or less groggy ; and one lay dead drunk on the floor.

Jem Perkins it was, a rare boozier—very stout and as heavy as lead—

But we all lent a hand and endeavoured to get him up home and to bed.

Well, as we was a-struggling with Perkins—a-lifting him on to his feet—

Jack Smithers burst into the tap-room, and his face was as white as a sheet.

"Look alive and come out, mates!" he shouted, "there's a ship gone ashore on the sand ;

Bill Thompson's a-getting his boat out, and before you can wink she'll be manned."

"Wot o' that?" cries old Brown ; "I'll be jiggered if I goes again to a wreck,

I've been out too often for nothing, and I tell you I don't like the spec!"

"I suppose it's some coaster," said Jackson, "and if you choose to go I shall not!"

"A coaster?" cried Smithers, "you lubber, it's a gentleman's schooner-rigged yacht!"

Just didn't we tumble out quickly? Jem Perkins we dropped on the floor ;

And, as fast as our sea-boots would let us, we reg'larly raced to the shore.

Down the beach went our boat in a twinkling, and into the breakers we run :

Bill Thompson had got a fair start ; but we didn't intend to be done.

We pulled more like forty than four, sir, and soon gave old Thompson the slip,

Till, in less than the time I've been talking, we got within hail o' the ship.

There she lay hard and fast on the shoal, with the waves washing over her deck—

If she'd not been so strong-built and tant, she'd have long before that been a wreck.

As we neared her the moon showed a light through a bit of a break in the clouds ;

And we made out a man and a female a-holding on tight by the shrouds.

They looked to be father and daughter, and gentle-folks, too, as I guessed—

So we thought we'd lay by for a minute, and just take a bit of a rest.

There wasn't no call for to hurry : when people like that's in distress,

It's a good plan to wait just to see what they'll pay to get out o' the mess.

This soon brought 'em up to their bearings : the gentleman got fairly wild—

"Pull quick, men," he cried, "I'll reward you if only you rescue my child!"

Now that's just the langwidge I likes, sir ; I thinks it the sweetest o' sounds.

"How much?" I sings out ; and he answered : "I offer yōu five hundred pounds!"

There wasn't no 'casion to bargain, with such a fine promise o' cash ;

So of course we let go in a moment, and pulled alongside in a flash.

We first took aboard the young lady, while the gentleman waited his turn ;

Then we hoisted him into the boat, and we made 'em both snug in the stern.

After this we was ready to start : "Pull away, lads, for shore!" I calls out ;

But we'd hardly shoved clear o' the yacht, when the master and men raised a shout.

"For God's sake, come back!" cried the skipper ; "Don't leave us to drown!" sang the crew.

"We have got what we want, mates," I answered ; "Bill Thompson can look after you."

Good Lord, how they darned us and cursed us, because that we'd left 'em behind!

I'd better not say what they called us ; but bless you, sir, we didn't mind.

All we thought on was landing our prizes, of getting sharp back to the beach ;

And touching the pounds we was promised—a hundred and twenty-five each.

I reckoned it out to that figure, and thought what I'd do with my share ;

How I'd go on the spree for a fortnit, and dive on the best o' good fare.

So we pulled with a will, while the breakers came rolling and foaming along ;

'Twas a pretty tough job to make way, for the tide was a-running out strong.

Well, all of a sudden a sea as was gath'ring behind in our wake

Came curling high over our heads, and I saw it was going to break.

In the stern sat the lass and her father, he holding her round with his arm ;

But the rush and the roar of the wave made her tremble and pale with alarm.

As it broke, she sprang up with a scream. "Keep your seat, Miss, for God's sake!" I cried ;

When down dashed the mountain o' water, and swept her clean over the side.

We was pretty nigh stunned by the deluge, and knocked about this way and that ;

And so dazed that for near half-a-minute we didn't know what to be at.

But the gentleman got back his senses a little while
 sooner than we,
 And crying "My child! oh my daughter!" jumped
 after her into the sea.
 Well, we rowed like old Harry to save 'em; but
 Lord, sir! the boat was half-full,
 And we couldn't make no way whatever, no matter
 how hard we might pull.
 Ah! it drove us fair wild with vexation to think
 we could get such a prize;
 And then go and lose it in that way, right under
 our very own eyes.
 But we did—they was carried to sea and we never
 caught sight of 'em more,
 Till a day or two after, down yonder, their bodies
 was washed up ashore.
 How we got back to land doesn't matter: indeed,
 sir, I couldn't quite say;
 We was all of us fairly dumbfounded at being
 done out of the pay.

But that ain't the end of my story: Bill Thompson
 got out with his men,
 For the yacht held together till morning, and didn't
 break up even then.
 So they boarded her soon after daylight, and found,
 stowed away in her hold,
 Some boxes of what they call bullion—just ten
 thousand pounds worth o' gold;
 Which they brought safe to land in the cutter, as
 well as the crew of the yacht;
 And the very reward we was promised was just the
 reward that they got.
 For the yachtsmen let out to the owners as how we
 had left 'em to drown;
 So the other chaps took the five hundred, and we
 not so much as a crown.
 There—of all the 'bad luck that I've met with, I
 vow this here job was the worst;
 But the next time, before I save life, sir, I'll take
 care the money's safe first.

E. J. GOODMAN.

By permission of the Author.

• THE CUCKOO CLOCK.

OUT of a clearance, bankrupt stock,
 One day I bought a cuckoo clock;
 A piece of mechanism cheap,
 Full guaranteed the time to keep;
 And that, as every hour rolled by,
 A little door would open-fly,
 When out the bird would spring,
 The time o'day to sing
 As accurately, in extenso,
 As could be counted by Colenso:
 Cuckoo! Cuckoo! Cuckoo!
 Oh, I was happiness personified
 As on that day I proudly homeward hied,

Hugging the clock securely 'neath my arm,
 Thenceforth of my dull life to be the charm.
 I wound it up, and placed it on a stand;
 Manipulating then the minute hand,
 I turned it round and round,
 And revelled in the sound
 Of "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" 'Twas delightful.
 If then, perchance, some very, very spiteful
 Chap had prophesied
 That I of that lov'd sound should ever tire,
 I would have tackled him with instant ire,
 And said he really lied.

But to return. The clock with regularity
 Ticked on and kept me in gleeful hilarity.
 As each revolving hour was sung,
 All breathless on the sound I hung,
 And sadly dull the time I found
 Until I heard the next hour's sound;
 Ay, more: at least for minutes ten
 Before 'twas time to strike again,
 Where'er I was, whatever I was doing,
 I ceased to do the task I was pursuing,
 And, listening with increasing longing, waited
 Until my glutton ears again were sated;
 While sleep to me was naught but hourly dozing,
 With "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" interposing.
 That "Cuckoo!" which I never dreamt could
 pall,
 Or with discordance on my hearing fall.
 But, ah! full many who are much acuter
 Than I am often fail to read the future.
 After a week of happiness supreme,
 I was recalled to earth from my long dream
 By the return of wife and family
 From a short trip down to the briny sea.
 Our loving greetings o'er, with swelling pride,
 And stately mien, I took them all aside,
 And shewed with rapture keen
 The wonderful machine.
 Oh! how amazed they were,
 As they did all declare

They ne'er had seen so fine a thing before,
 And certain were they ne'er should see one more.
 Their rapture undisguised
 Shewed that they really prized
 The ingenious automaton
 Much more than I myself had done.
 How eagerly they listened,
 As every hour drew nigh!
 And, oh! how their eyes glistened
 When rose that "Cuckoo" cry!
 'Twas long ere they would follow my behest
 To go to bed,
 And when they sped
 Unto their cots, e'en then 'twas not to rest,—
 No, no; 'twas but to listen to
 That still recurring call "Cuckoo!"
 And on my ear throughout the livelong night
 Fell shouts, betokening the rare delight
 My youngsters felt, when rose that jerky sound
 Of "Cuckoo! Cockoo!" as the hours went round.

As for my darling spouse,
 Who, quiet as a mouse,
 Habitually slumbered,
 She, too, the hours numbered,
 As in succession they went by,
 Responsive to that "Cuckoo" cry.
 But now all suddenly,—'twas wondrous strange,—
 There came o'er me a most astounding change:
 That sound, which once I loved as full melodious,
 Now on my sad, distracted ear fell odious!
 Alas! the spell was snapped;
 I felt my knuckles rapped;
 The Beauty I had wooed was turned a Hag;
 The Love, which once I thought could never flag,
 Was now distilled to stubborn Hate,
 To Hatred most inveterate,
 Never, ah! never to abate,—
 Although incredible may seem my fate,
 'Tis naught but sober truth what now I state.
 That awful clock, which yelled "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!"
 Oh! how I wished it now at Timbuctoo!
 The weary day at last being ended,
 Towards my Club my way I wended;
 And not returning early,
 I found my good wife surly;
 But her ill temper soon was mended,
 As "Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" rose in quick succession
 A dozen times, with terrible expression;
 While I grew really frantic,—
 My rage became gigantic;
 Kind sleep to me was lost;
 All night I groaned and toss'd;
 And on the morn arose a desperate man,
 With one determined, though uncertain plan,—
 To rid myself of that accursed machine,
 Which now began to cause me such chagrin.
 But barriers stood before me,—
 A sword depended o'er me,—
 For, if I were to do it,
 My wife and babes would rue it;
 And, more than that, they'd shew it,
 And surely let me know it.
 A gentle fib I therefore thought most fitting;
 So, pleading that my head was really splitting,
 I stopped the pendulum,
 When straight arose a hum,
 Which grew into a horrid growl,
 And then matured into a howl:
 Their tongues upon me all down pounced,
 And I was savagely denounced
 As a brute
 Most acute.
 My frail device thus falling quickly through,
 Once more arose that demon cry, "Cuckoo!"
 Ah me! I felt myself a mortal doomed;
 Eternal misery in the future loomed.
 Savage despair gives boldness to some fellows;
 And now it did to me—I spoilt the bellows
 Of the little organ,
 But the chicks to roar 'gan;

So straight the thing was sent off to be mended,
 And came back shrieking ere the day was ended.
 Throughout the week that next ensued,
 I still relentlessly pursued
 My fell scheme of destruction;
 But on my plans no luck shone,
 'And I had only still to bear
 The torture, and to tear my hair.
 How I survived these days I can't explain:
 I'm sure I could not live them o'er again.
 At length one night, just as we went to rest,
 My loving wife in anguish smote her breast,
 Her eyes in torrents broke out,
 As thus she sadly spoke out:
 "I could not bear it longer,
 Were I ten times ten stronger,
 There! you may laugh,
 And you may chaff;
 But now you'll have a most delightful shock,—
 Oh! we are weary of that Cuckoo clock;
 Those sounds, which once we heard with gladness,
 Now drive us swiftly on to madness,"—
 She was proceeding;
 But, never heeding,
 I only clasped my arms around her,—
 Just snatched a kiss, a great resounder,—
 Rushed for the clock! dashed it upon the floor,—
 Uttered a wild, prolonged, triumphant roar;
 And, dancing like a ballet girl,
 With active stamp, and twist, and twirl,
 Ground it to particles, ere any one
 Could have invoked our friend Jack Robinson;
 And once again became a happy mortal,
 Although the demon nearly spoilt my sport all.
 And now, good neighbour, pray take my advice:
 If you would happy be, let naught entice
 You to possess a clock that shouts "Cuckoo!"
 But if you have a foe, whom with a hate
 A million overproof you loathe, then you,
 (That is, if you love vengeance) should not wait
 A day; but send your enemy a box
 Containing half a dozen Cuckoo Clocks!

EDWARD JOHNS.

By permission of the Author.

OUR COW.

It was agreed, as we lived in the country, that a cow was necessary. What is home without a bovine, especially if no milkman's morning bell resounds in the neighbourhood? It was also agreed that our cow should be a genuine country cow, one that had not the deceitful ways of the City animal,* who generally gives skim milk; so our cow was bought sixty miles away, and appropriately enough, she took a steer-age passage in a steamer to get to our home in Canada, which is on the banks of the Detroit River. The wharf is

about a quarter of a mile from the house, and I stood there with two or three of my neighbours, who had kindly offered to help me home with the cow. As the steamer rounded to, I noticed that the cow had the whole lower deck to herself, and that there were guy ropes from every tieable portion of her to stationary articles on board.

The passengers on the upper deck had a pleased, expectant look on their faces, as if there was something enjoyable ahead. When the gangway plank was run out, the deck-hands seemed reluctant to interfere with the cow. The captain came down the forward stairs and shouted:

"Let go her head-line; slack up aft."

"Ay, ay, sir," cried the sailors, and the command was obeyed.

"Get a line out in front."

One of the sailors took the original farm rope that was around her horns and got out on the wharf.

All the other lines were now removed, and as the cow began to look steadily at the fellow out on the wharf, pulling on the rope, he began to tremble.

"Port her a little, and send her forward," said the captain.

"Port it is, sir," answered one of the hands, as he approached the animal with a club to induce her to port.

Our cow had been standing like a statue all the while, gazing at the man on the wharf. Now she made one wild wave of her horns in the direction of the club person. He rapidly tumbled over two barrels, and sprang on a box, while the cow stood triumphant over the club.

A murmur of approbation came from the passengers, who were peering down the stairways, while the boldest were perched up on inaccessible articles of luggage.

"Can I be of any service?" I mildly asked the captain.

"Well, yes," said he. "If you could go out and get a good serviceable coroner you would do us a favour; I think we shall need one."

Meanwhile the passengers were showing how the cow could easily be got out, but none of them came down to put their theories into practice.

"Make fast your head-line," cried the captain, to the man on the wharf. He gave the rope a couple of rapid turns around a projecting timber.

"Now, all hands aft," was the next command, and the boys gathered around in the rear of the cow.

"All together, now!" was the cry, and a dozen men gently shoved the reluctant cow shorewards, while the wharf man shortened the rope around the timber.

Our cow resolutely planted her four hoofs down and hung back, but the combined force of the crew was too much for her, and she slid along down the plank amid the cheers of the passengers. Suddenly she changed her mind and made a spring to the

end of the rope. The wild grappling of the pushers as they went down with the most astonishing unanimity brought forth the heartfelt applause of the discriminating audience.

By this time the captain was on the upper deck ringing the boat ahead, and I could see the passengers around him coaxing him to stay and let them watch the cow sacrifice those of us that were left on the wharf.

One of my near neighbours, a big, powerful young man, said that he would take home the cow for me, that steamboat men did not understand how to treat cattle anyway, and he proceeded to unwind the rope from the timber. The wharf, however, seemed to suit the cow exactly, and she refused to budge. We tried to shove her along as the steamboat men had done, but it was too big a contract. At last one of the men brought a fork, and while the rope was got ready for a tornado, he touched up the cow. It was a brilliant success. Man and cow disappeared up the road in a whirlwind of dust. Everybody along the route thought it was a runaway; the women shrieked, and the men climbed fences. We never expected to see either cow or man again. He, however, understood his business. He let the infuriated animal drag him along until he reached the open gate, and then with one wild bound he sprang ahead and gave the rope a turn around the starboard gate-post. The way that cow came round was amazing. She described a semicircle very much quicker than Euclid could have done it. She lay there in a heap, panting, and evidently wondering how it all came about.

"There's your cow," said my friend, covered with dust and triumph, as he closed the gate and flung the rope over her prostrate form; "she may be somewhat out of repair, but she's there."

The neighbours leaned over the fence and told me what they would do if they had a cow like that. The cow suddenly sprang to her feet again, and we all scattered a little. Then she ran up and down like a roaring lion, seeking a part of the fence to get over, and in less than five minutes tried to jump the fence a dozen times, while the rope trailed behind her like a comet's tail.

We didn't milk her that evening. Next morning I suggested that we might get one of the neighbours to come and milk the cow, but the farmer laughed at me and said that the cow would be quiet enough by this time, and that any cow was all right if you only knew how to treat her.

I said I was willing to stand treat in any way, but I preferred to have somebody else milk the cow.

Again I was laughed down, and was just simpleton enough to take a pail and sallp forth. Our cow stood at the very remotest corner of the field. I cried "Co'boss, co'boss, co'boss," but she wouldn't "co." She didn't seem to understand the phrase which I had been taught to believe all cows compre-

hended. Finding that I was making myself ridiculous without bringing the cow any nearer, I started towards her. I will do her the justice to say that she attempted to meet me half-way, but luckily I got over the fence in the meantime. I tried to explain to her that it was utterly senseless to act in this manner. The process of milking had to be gone through, however disagreeable it might be to both of us. It seemed as if I had convinced the animal, but the moment I went to get on her side of the fence her convictions appeared to set the other way. I oozed along my side of the fence as quietly as I could, conversing all the while in a conciliating tone with the cow, but she steadily faced me until we were nearly opposite the house, and I began to realise that I was about to be cut off from home and family if I couldn't get rid of this cow. A brilliant idea struck me. I would get hold of the long rope that trailed behind. I climbed the fence with as little ostentation as I could, and made a dash for the rope and got it. I then appreciated the conundrum, "If you had hold of a tiger's tail, would you hold on or let go?" After the waltz had lasted a few minutes I concluded to let go, and make a break for the house, the cow making a very good second. If the kitchen door had not been open I suppose I should be looking after my life-insurance money instead of telling this. As it was I went clean through the kitchen into the dining-room, and fell over three chairs and part of a table. My wife was excessively annoyed. She said she had been trying to get the baby asleep for the last half-hour, and that if I thought that way of acting was in any way funny, I might take the furniture outdoors and play circus out there.

"My dear," said I, pathetically, "if you knew that I have just escaped from the jaws—or rather the horns—of death, you would not talk in that unfeeling manner."

Then she told me to put the pail of milk in the cellar, and she would attend to it in a few minutes. This was the unkindest cut of all.

"It would take," said I, severely, "a man in complete triple-plated steel armour to milk that cow."

"And have you been out all this time and never milked the cow?"

"It is not a question of time, Mrs. Sharp; it is a question of whether garments are strong enough to resist those horns."

And then she made the same remark that had previously been offered, to the effect that anybody could manage a cow; and I invited her out to give a practical illustration of the truth thereof. The cow was quietly standing a few rods away, and while I provided myself with an axe-handle, my wife calmly approached the statuesque cow, saying soothingly, "So Bossy; poor Bossy; so-o-o-o Bossy."

The cow gazed in astonishment at the new

element in the problem, and it struck me that the brute would just be deceitful enough to act kind of civilised life. But my fears were unfounded.

"See, how docile she is."

"Don't 'holler' before you are out of the wood," said I.

"What's that?"

I said it might perhaps be preferable to postpone all congratulatory remarks until we had emerged from the forest primeval.

"Oh, I understand."

Just then the docile animal gave one short bellow, and made one short jump forward.

When we entered the house, my wife breathlessly remarked that it was perhaps better to get a neighbour, and I rather self-complacently replied that I said all along that the sacrifice of a neighbour would be necessary. So I went and told a neighbour that it was some time since I had milked a cow, and that I was rather out of practice, and if he would kindly come over, &c. &c. And he kindly came. I went into the house and congratulated myself on getting that cow milked. In a few minutes, my wife said a man wanted to speak to me outside. I went out and found it was our neighbour—he was on the other side of the fence.

"The pail," said he, "is at the upper end of the field. The cow is taking care of it. You can never milk that cow until the rope is taken off her horns. It hurts her now and makes her wild." And, then, after reflecting for a few moments, he added slowly: "I suppose you would get some one to take off the rope for fifteen or twenty dollars?"

I shall always be proud of the fact that I took off that rope myself. I consider the feat a triumph of modern engineering. This is how it was done.

There is an ancient pear-tree on the place that originally came from France, or, at least, the seed did, and it has stood the storms of a century, and cares no more for a modern cow than it does for the idle wind that it regards not. As the cow was grazing in the grateful shade of the tree, I stole up discreetly, keeping the trunk of the tree between myself and the quadruped. I secured the rope, and unobtrusively tied it around the trunk of the tree. I then made myself visible, and the cow at once took after me. She wound the rope round and round the tree, and each time her circle of travel narrowed until the side of her face was close up against the rough bark of the tree. She pressed eagerly forward, but the more she pressed the tighter fix she found herself in. With a sharp knife I cut the rope above her forehead, and then ran for all I was worth. I escaped, although her nigh horn took off part of the door-jamb. The rope was the secret of the trouble, however, and since then you could not wish for a milder animal than our cow.

ROBERT BARR.

By permission of the Author.

TWO MOTHERS.

FAR down a dark and narrow lane, where ever
hangs a gloom,
A mother and her sickly boy dwelt in a humble
room;
A little cot, a poor, thin bed, a table, stool, and chair,
With bits of delf and cooking things were all the
fittings there,
Save three rude prints upon the walls—St.
Patrick's bearded face,
The Saviour stretched upon the cross, and Mary
full of grace.
The faded garb was slight and cold that clad the
lowly pair,
Small was the fire upon their hearth, and scanty
was their fare.
Yet were they not in sadness sunk, that mother
and her boy,
For love, like that the angels knew, to them brought
holy joy.
In homes of neighbouring folk she worked at
humble tasks all day;
He tidied up the little room, then on the bed he
lay,
Or nigh the broken window sat, and felt it sad and
sweet
To listen to the noisy play of children in the street.
With eve his toil-worn mother came, then what
could match the bliss,
The rapture of their fond embrace, their long and
loving kiss;
And when did sweeter prayers go up to Christ the
meek and mild,
Than those that mingled from their lips, that
mother and her child.

But he was wasting fast away; his lips grew thin
and white,
His skin was moist and cold as clay, though still
his eye was bright.
The boy was dying; could no aid or kindly care be
found
Amongst the thousands, rich and poor, who lived
and moved around?
Ah, yee, thank God; in all our towns and cities,
great and small,
St. Vincent's glorious brotherhood attend the suf-
ferer's call—
Kind-hearted helpers, young and old, of various
social grades,
Pale shopmen from their busy stores, rough toilers
of the trades;
They, when their long day's work is done, and
night's dark shades come down,
With parcels weighted, move, in pairs, unnoticed
through the town;
They seek the dim abodes of want, climb many a
creaky stair,
Find out where direst needs are felt, and leave some
comfort there.

To this poor widow and her son such loving calls
they paid,
Spoke cheering words, gave welcome gifts, and pro-
mised future aid.
But as the boy, 'twas plain to see, no human skill
could save
From the consumptive's mournful doom, to fill an
early grave,
With the poor mother they arranged that from
that squalid scene
They'd take him to a calm retreat, 'midst trees and
meadows green,
Where light and air, and wholesome fare, and love
almost divine,
Would glad his guileless heart awhile and soothe
his life's decline.

They brought him to St. Mary's Home; the gentle
sisters there
Spoke to him fondly, took his hand, and kissed his
forehead fair.
They placed him in a cheery room, where all looked
bright and gay,
They laid him in a cosy cot, they watched him
night and day.
Each hour the beauty of the place for him made
new surprise,
He gazed on every loving face, he thanked them
with his eyes.
But when some days had come and gone, by many
a weary sign,
His tender nurses could discern the child began to
pine;
Big tears came rolling down his cheeks; his fragile
frame would shake,
And in his bed at night he sobbed as if his heart
would break;
And when with winning words they sought the
secret of his pain,
"Oh, send me home," he wildly cried, "I must go
home again."

Again within their dingy room that son and mother
met,
Again with tears of grief and love the cheeks of
both were wet;
But while she stroked his soft black hair, she said,
'twixt kiss and kiss,
"My boy, why did you leave the Home for such a
place as this?
Were the good nuns not kind to you, as they are
kind to all?
Were there not doctors for your need and nurses
at your call?
Did you not like the place, my son, that you have
come from there
To this poor garret-room of ours, so chilly, dark,
and bare?"

"Like it, dear mother!" said the boy; "no lovelier
place could be;
'Twas just like Heaven; and all the nuns, like
angels were to me.

My little bed was white as snow, bright was each glass and tin,
 And when the window-sash was up the birdies' song came in.
 But, mother, all the live-long day, and all the night time, too,
 A big pain in my heart would stay—I thought and dreamed of you.
 I used to see you sitting here, heart-broken, all alone,
 I used to see your flowing tears, and hear you sigh and moan!
 I knew that 'twas for me you wept, for me your heart was sore,
 I wished to kiss your poor thin face, and bid you weep no more.
 I could not bear the grief at all; I sorrowed and I cried,
 I made them take me from that place, and bring me to your side.
 Now we shall live together here till Death shall part us two—
 I know he's near me, mother dear; but I shall die with you."

Loved Mother Ireland, so it is with many a son of thine,
 Far, far away, by night and day, the hearts within them pine;
 Whate'er their fate or fortunes be, their glory or their gain,
 No comfort know they while thy lot is poverty and pain.
 They give their silver and their gold; their time, their toil they spend—
 Yea, they would give their hearts' best blood thy cruel wrongs to end.
 But not in vain they love and strive, for now the signs are clear,
 A time of joy for them, for all, is surely drawing near.
 Soon shall they come from many lands to cheer and bless thee, sweet,
 To touch again thy gracious hands, to kiss thy queenly feet,
 And thank the God who helped their work, and let them live to see
 The day of right and freedom bright that dawns at last for thee.

T. D. SULLIVAN.

By permission of the Author.

AT THE SEASIDE.

BUCKETS and spades! buckets and spades!
 Merry-legged manikins, plump little maids,
 Over the sand-hills and off to the shore,
 Down where the grey billows gallop and roar;

Picking bright pebbles that sparkle with spray
 (Each one a grand Koh-i-noor in its way);
 Searching for sea-weed and gathering shells;
 Building sand castles and boring salt wells;
 Taking up frolicsome shrimps by the tail;
 Charging a crab in his brown coat of mail;
 Wading in brine-bubble, wet to the knee;
 Watching the shrimps as they sail out to sea,
 Shaking their light winglets out as they go,
 Warm in the sunbeam and white as the snow.

Pray for the sailors who peril their lives,
 Pray for the little ones, pray for their wives;
 Mark the wild groups as they gather on deck,
 Weep o'er their doom when the vessel's a wreck,
 Helpless and heavenless, far from relief,
 Drowned in the blue depths, or dashed on the reef.

Hark! the boom of the gun! so a truce to our play,
 We must hoist our blue-peter, make sail, and away;
 Up—up with the buckets, and on with the things!
 Who will be first when the dinner-bell rings?
 Cheerily, cheerily, five in a row,
 Hair in a tangle and cheeks in a glow,
 Eyes all a-twinkle with mirth and with glee,
 Hearts light as thistledown blown o'er the lea.
 Glorious appetites! capital cheer!
 It's little we find come amiss to us here;
 We will eat and we'll drink as none ever before,
 We will laugh and we'll quaff like fat friars of yore;
 Then to rest for an hour, to ease body and brain,
 And away to the sea and the sand-hills again!

LINDON MEADOWS.
 (REV. CHAS. B. GREATREX.)

By permission of the Author.

THE ROMANCE OF THE INNS OF COURT.

"I HAVE been to-night," said Mr. Pickwick, "in a place which you all know very well, doubtless, but which I have not been in before for some years, and know very little of—I mean, Gray's Inn, gentlemen. Curious little nooks in a great place like London, these old Inns are."

"Aha!" said the old man, "Aha! who was talking about the Inns?"

"I was, sir," replied Mr. Pickwick, "I was observing what singular old places they are."

"You!" said the old man, contemptuously, "what do *you* know of the time when young men shut themselves up in these lonely rooms, and read, and read, hour after hour, and night after night, till their reason wandered beneath their midnight studies; till their mental powers were exhausted, till morning's light brought no freshness or health to them; and they sank beneath the unnatural

devotion of their youthful energies to their dry old books! Coming down to a later time, and a very different day, what do you know of the gradual sinking beneath consumption, or the quick wasting of fever—the grand results of ‘life,’ and dissipation—which men have undergone in these same rooms? How many vain pleaders for mercy, do you think, have turned away heart-sick from the lawyer’s office, to find a resting-place in the Thames, or a refuge in the gaol? They are no ordinary houses, these. There is not a panel in the old wainscoting but what, if it were endowed with the powers of speech and memory, could start from the wall and tell its tale of horror—the Romance of Life, sir, the Romance of Life.”

“I never thought of the romance of this particular subject before, certainly,” said Mr. Pickwick, laughing.

“To be sure, you didn’t,” said the little old man, “of course not. As a friend of mine used to say to me, ‘What is there in chambers in particular?’ ‘Queer old places!’ said I. ‘Not at all,’ said he. ‘Lovely,’ said I. ‘Not a bit of it,’ said he. He died one morning of apoplexy, as he was going to open his outer door. Fell with his head in his own letter-box, and there he lay for eighteen months. Everybody thought he’d gone out of town.”

“And how was he found at last?” inquired Mr. Pickwick.

“The benchers determined to break his door open, as he hadn’t paid any rent for two years. So they did. Forced the lock; and a very dusty skeleton, in a blue coat, black knee-shorts, and silks, fell forward in the arms of the porter who opened the door. Queer that? Rather, perhaps: rather, eh?” And the little old man put his head more on one side, and rubbed his hands with unspeakable glee.

“I know another case,” said the little old man, when his chuckles had in some degree subsided. “It occurred in Clifford’s Inn. Tenant of a top-set—bad character—shut himself up in his bedroom closet, and took a dose of arsenic. The steward thought he had run away; opened the door and put a bill up. Another man came, took the chambers, furnished them, and went to live there. Somehow or other he couldn’t sleep—always restless and uncomfortable. ‘Odd,’ says he. ‘I’ll make the other room my bedchamber, and this my sitting-room.’ He made the change, and slept very well at night, but suddenly found that he couldn’t read in the evening. He got nervous and uncomfortable, and used to be always snuffing his candles and staring about him. ‘I can’t make this out,’ said he, when he came home from the play one night, and was drinking a glass of cold grog, with his back to the wall, in order that he mightn’t be able to fancy there was any one behind him. ‘I can’t make it out,’ said he; and just then his eyes rested on the little closet that had always

been locked up, and a shudder ran through his whole frame from top to toe. ‘I have felt this strange feeling before,’ said he. ‘I cannot help thinking there’s something wrong about that closet.’ He made a strong effort, plucked up his courage, shivered the lock with a blow or two of the poker, opened the door; and there, sure enough, standing bolt upright in the corner, was the last tenant, with a little bottle clasped firmly in his hand, and his face livid with the hue of a painful death.”

As the little old man concluded, he looked round on the attentive faces of his wondering auditory with a smile of grim delight.

“What strange things these are you tell us of, sir,” said Mr. Pickwick minutely scanning the old man’s countenance by the aid of his glasses.

“Strange!” said the little old man, “Nonsense; you think them strange because you know nothing about them. I knew another man—let me see—it’s forty years ago now—who took an old, damp, rotten set of chambers, in one of the most ancient Inns, that had been shut up and empty for years and years before. There were lots of old women’s stories about the place, and it certainly was very far from being a cheerful one; but he was poor, and the rooms were cheap, and that would have been quite a sufficient reason for him, if they had been ten times worse than they really were. He was obliged to take some mouldering fixtures that were in the place, and among the rest was a great lumbering wooden press for papers, with large glass doors, and a green curtain inside—a pretty useless thing for him, for he had no papers to put in it; and as to his clothes, he carried them about with him, and that wasn’t very hard work either. Well, he had moved in all his furniture—it wasn’t quite a truckful—and sprinkled it about the rooms so as to make the four chairs look as much like a dozen as possible, and was sitting down before the fire at night, drinking the first glass of two gallons of whisky he had ordered on credit, wondering whether it would ever be paid for, and if so, in how many years’ time, when his eyes encountered the glass doors of the wooden press. ‘Ah!’ says he, ‘if I hadn’t been obliged to take that ugly article at the old broker’s valuation, I might have got something comfortable for the money. I’ll tell you what it is, old fellow,’ he said, speaking aloud to the press, just because he had nothing else to speak to, ‘if it wouldn’t cost more to break up your old carcase than it would ever be worth afterwards, I’d have a fire out of you in less than no time.’ He had hardly spoken the words when a sound resembling a faint groan appeared to issue from the interior of the press. It startled him at first, but thinking, on a moment’s reflection, that it must be some young fellow in the next chambers who had been dining out, he put his feet on the fender, and raised the poker to stir the fire. At that moment the sound was repeated, and one of the glass doors slowly opening, disclosed a pale and emaciated figure in

soiled and worn apparel, standing erect in the press. The figure was tall and thin, and the countenance expressive of care and anxiety; but there was something in the hue of the skin, and gaunt and unearthly appearance of the whole form, which no being of this world was ever seen to wear. 'Who are you?' said the new tenant, turning very pale, poising the poker in his hand, however, and taking a very decent aim at the countenance of the figure, 'who are you?' 'Don't throw that poker at me!' replied the form. 'If you hurled it with ever so sure an aim, it would pass through me without resistance, and expend its force on the wood behind. I am a spirit.' 'And pray, what do you want here?' faltered the tenant. 'In this room,' replied the apparition, 'my worldly ruin was worked, and I and my children beggared. In this press, the papers in a long, long suit, which accumulated for years, were deposited. In this room, when I had died of grief and long-deferred hope, two wily harpies divided the wealth for which I had contested during a wretched existence, of which, at last, not one farthing was left for my unhappy descendants. I terrified them from the spot, and since that day have prowled by night—the only period at which I can revisit the earth—about the scenes of my long-protracted misery. This apartment is mine; leave it to me.' 'If you insist upon making your appearance here,' said the tenant, who had had time to collect his presence of mind during this prosy statement of the ghost's, 'I shall give up possession with the greatest pleasure; but I should like to ask you one question, if you will allow me.' 'Say on,' said the apparition, sternly. 'Well,' said the tenant, 'I don't apply the observation personally to you, because it is equally applicable to all the ghosts I ever heard of; but it does appear to me somewhat inconsistent that, when you have an opportunity of visiting the fairest spots on earth—for I suppose space is nothing to you—you should always return to the very places where you have been most miserable.' 'Egad! that's very true; I never thought of that before,' said the ghost. 'You see, sir,' pursued the tenant, 'this is a very uncomfortable room. From the appearance of the press, I should be disposed to say that it is not wholly free from bugs; and I really think you might find much more comfortable quarters, to say nothing of the climate of London, which is extremely disagreeable.' 'You are very right, sir,' said the ghost, politely; 'it never struck me till now. I'll try change of air, directly; and in fact, he began to vanish as he spoke—his legs, indeed, had quite disappeared. 'And if, sir,' said the tenant, calling after him, 'if you would have the goodness to suggest to the other ladies and gentlemen who are now occupied in haunting old empty houses, that they might be much more comfortable elsewhere, you will confer a very great benefit upon society.' 'I will,' replied the ghost; 'we must be dull fellows—very dull fellows indeed; I can't imagine how we have been

so stupid.' With these words the spirit disappeared; and what is rather remarkable," added the old man, with a shrewd look round the table, "he never came back again."

CHARLES DICKENS.

IVRY.

Now glory to the Lord of Hosts, from Whom all glories are!
And glory to our Sovereign Liege, King Henry of Navarre!
Now let there be the merry sound of music and of dance,
Through thy corn-fields green, and sunny vines, oh pleasant land of France!
And thou Rochelle, our own Rochelle, proud city of the waters,
Again let rapture light the eyes of all thy mourning daughters.
As thou wert constant in our ills, be joyous in our joy,
For cold, and stiff, and still are they who wrought thy walls annoy.
Hurrah! Hurrah! a single field hath turned the chance of war;
Hurrah! Hurrah! for Ivry, for Henry of Navarre.
Oh! how our hearts were beating, when, at the dawn of day,
We saw the army of the League drawn out in long array;
With all its priest-led citizens, and all its rebel peers,
And Appenzel's stout infantry, and Egmont's Flemish spears.
There rode the brood of false Lorraine, the curses of our land;
And dark Mayenne was in the midst, a truncheon in his hand:
And, as we looked on them, we thought of Seine's empurpled flood,
And good Coligni's hoary hair all dabbled with his blood;
And we cried unto the living God, who rules the fate of war,
To fight for His own Holy Name, and Henry of Navarre.
The King is come to marshal us, in all his armour drest,
And he has bound a snow-white plume upon his gallant crest.
He looked upon his people, and a tear was in his eye;
He looked upon the traitors, and his glance was stern and high.
Right graciously he smiled on us, as rolled from wing to wing,
Down all our line, a deafening shout, "God save our Lord the King!"

"And if my standard-bearer fall, as fall full well
he may,
For never saw I promise yet of such a bloody fray,
Press where ye see my white plume shine, amidst
the ranks of war,
And be your oriflamme to-day the helmet of
Navarre."

Hurrah! the foes are moving. Hark to the
mingled din
Of fife, and steed, and trump, and drum, and roar-
ing culverin.

The fiery Duke is pricking fast across Saint André's
plain,

With all the hireling chivalry of Guelders and
Almayne.

Now by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of
France,

Charge for the golden lilies—upon them with the
lance!

A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand
spears in rest,

A thousand knights are pressing, close behind the
snow-white crest;

And in they burst, and on they rushed, while, like
a guiding star,

Amidst the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of
Navarre.

Now God be praised, the day is ours. Mayenne
hath turned his rein,

D'Aumale hath cried for quarter. The Flemish
Count is slain.

Their ranks are breaking like thin clouds before a
Biscay gale;

The field is heaped with bleeding steeds, and flags,
and cloven mail.

And then we thought on vengeance, and all along
our van,

"Remember Saint Bartholomew!" was passed from
man to man.

But out spake gentle Henry, "No Frenchman is
my foe:

Down, down with every foreigner, but let your
brethren go."

Oh! was there ever such a knight, in friendship or
in war,

As our Sovereign Lord, King Henry, the soldier
of Navarre?

Right well fought all the Frenchmen who fought
for France to-day;

And many a lordly banner God gave them for a
prey.

But we of the religion have borne us best in fight;
And the good Lord of Rosny hath ta'en the cornet
white,

Our own true Maximilian the cornet white hath
ta'en,

The cornet white with crosses black, the flag of
false Lorraine.

Up with it high; unfurl it wide; that all the host
may know

How God hath humbled the proud house which
wrought His Church such woe.

Then on the ground, while trumpets sound their
loudest point of war,

Fling the red shreds, a foot-cloth meet for Henry
of Navarre.

Ho! maidens of Vienna; Ho! matrons of
Lucerne;

Weep, weep, and rend your hair for those who
never shall return.

Ho! Philip, send for charity, thy Mexican pistoles,
That Antwerp monks may sing a Mass for thy poor
spearman's souls.

Ho! gallant nobles of the League, look that your
arms be bright;

Ho! burghers of Saint Geneviève, keep watch and
ward to-night,

For our God hath crushed the tyrant, our God
hath raised the slave,

And mocked the counsel of the wise, and the valour
of the brave,

Then glory to His Holy name, from Whom all
glories are;

And glory to our Sovereign Lord, King Henry of
Navarre.

LORD MACAULAY.

THE LADY OF PROVENCE.

THE war-note of the Saracen was on the winds of
France,

It had stilled the harp of the troubadour, and the
clash of the tourney's lance.

The sounds of the sea, and the sounds of the
night,

And the hollow echoes of charge and flight,
Were around Clotilde, as she knelt to pray

In a chapel where the mighty lay,
On the old Provençal shore:

Many a Chatillon beneath,

Unstirred by the ringing trampet's breath,
His shroud of armour wore.

But weakly the voice of the Lady rose
Through the trophies of their proud repose;

And her fragile form, at every blast
That fell as the savage war-horn passed,

Trembling, as trembles a bird's quick heart
When it vainly strives from its cage to part,—

So knelt she in her woe;

A weeper alone with the tearless dead;—

Oh, they reck not of tears o'er their quiet shed,
Or the dust had stirred below!

Hark!—a swift step: she hath caught its tone
Through the dash of the sea, through the wild
wind's moan.

Is her lord returned with his conquering
bands?

No! a breathless vassal before her stands!
"Hast thou been on the field? art thou come from
the host!"

"From the slaughter, Lady! All, all is lost!
Our banners are taken—our knights laid low—
Our spearmen chased by the Paynim foe—
And, thy lord"—his voice took a sadder
sound—

"Thy lord—he is not on the bloody ground!
There are those who tell that the leader's plume
Was seen in the flight through the gathering
gloom!"

A change o'er her mien and spirit passed:
She ruled the heart which had beat so fast,
She dashed the tears from her kindling eye,
With a glance as of sudden royalty.

"Dost thou stand, by the tomb of the glorious
dead,

And fear not to say that their son hath fled?
Away!—he is lying by lance and shield:—
Point me the path to his battle-field!"

Silently with lips compressed,
Pale hands clasped above her breast,
Stately brow of anguish high,
Deathlike cheek, but dauntless eye,—
Silently, o'er that red plain,
Moved the Lady 'midst the slain.

She searched into many an unclosed eye
That looked without soul to the stormy sky;
She bowed down o'er many a shattered breast,
She lifted up helmet and cloven crest—

Not there, not there he lay!

"Lead where the most has been dared and done:
Where the heart of the battle hath bled;—lead
on!"

And the vassal took the way.

He turned to a dark and lonely tree

That waved o'er a fountain red;

Oh, swiftest there had the current free

For noble veins been shed!

Thickest there the spear-heads gleamed,

And the scattered plumage streamed,

And the broken shields were tossed,

And the shivered lances crossed—

He was **THERE**! the leader amidst his band,
Where the faithful had made their last vain stand;
With the falchion yet in his cold hand grasped,
And his country's flag to his bosom clasped!
She quelled in her soul the deep floods of woe,—
The time was not yet for their waves to flow!
And a proud smile shone on her pale despair,
As she turned to her followers:—"Your lord is
there!"

Look on him! know him by scarf and crest!
Bear him away with his sires to rest!"

There is no plumed head o'er the bier to bend—
No brother of battle—no princely friend:—

By the red fountain the valiant lie—

The flower of Provençal chivalry.

But **ONE** free step, and one lofty heart

Bear through that scene, to the last, their
part.

"I have won thy fame from the breath of wrong!

My soul hath risen for thy glory strong!

Now call me hence by thy side to be:

The world thou leav'st has no place for me.

Give me my home on thy noble heart!

Well have we loved—let us both depart!"

And pale on the breast of the dead she lay,

The living cheek to the cheek of clay.

The living cheek! oh, it was not in vain

That strife of the spirit to rend its chain!

She is there, at rest, in her place of pride!

In death, how queenlike!—a glorious bride!

From the long heart-withering early gone:

She hath loved—she hath loved—her task is done!

MRS. HEMANS.

LASCA.

It's all very well to write reviews,
And carry umbrellas, and keep dry shoes,
And say what every one's saying here,
And wear what every one else must wear;
But to-night I'm sick of the whole affair;
I want free life and I want fresh air;
And I sigh for the canter after the cattle,
The crack of the whips like shots in a battle,
The medley of horns, and hoofs, and heads
That wars and wrangles and scatters and spreads;
The green beneath and the blue above;
And dash and danger, and life and love.

And Lasca!

Lasca used to ride

On a mouse-grey mustang close to my side,

With blue *serapé*, and bright-bellied spur;

I laughed with joy as I looked at her!

Little knew she of books or of creeds—

An *Ave Maria* sufficed her needs;

Little she cared, save to be by my side,

To ride with me, and ever to ride,

From San Saba's shore to Lavaca's tide.

She was as bold as the billows that beat,

She was as wild as the breezes that blow;

From her little head to her little feet,

She was swayed in her suppleness to and fro

By each gust of passion: a sapling pine,

That grows on the edge of a Kansas bluff,

And wars with the wind when the weather is rough,

So like this Lasca, this love of mine.

She would hunger that I might eat,

Would take the bitter and leave me the sweet;

But once, when I made her jealous for fun,
At something I'd whispered, or looked, or done,
One Sunday in San Antonio,
To a glorious girl on the Alamo,
She drew from her garter a dear little dagger,
And—sting of a wasp!—it made me stagger!
An inch to the left, or an inch to the right,
And I shouldn't be maundering here to night!
But she sobbed, and sobbing, so swiftly bound
Her torn *reboso* about the wound,
That I quite forgave her. Scratches don't count
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

Her eye was brown—a deep, deep brown;
Her hair was darker than her eye;
And something in her smile and frown,
Curled crimson lip, and instep high,
Showed that there ran in each blue vein,
Mixed with the milder Aztec strain,
The vigorous vintage of Old Spain.
She was alive in every limb
With feeling to the finger-tips;
And when the sun is like a fire,
And sky one shining soft sapphire,
One does not drink in little sips.

Why did I leave the fresh and the free,
That suited her and suited me?
Listen awhile, and you will see;
But this be sure, in earth or air,
God and God's laws are everywhere,
And Nemesis comes with a foot as fleet
On the Texas trail as in Regent Street.

The air was heavy, the night was hot,
I sat by her side, and forgot—forgot:
Forgot the herd that were taking their rest,
Forgot that the air was close oppress,
That the Texas Norther comes sudden and soon,
In the dead of night or the blaze of noon;
That once let the herd at its breath take fright,
Nothing on earth can stop their flight;
And woe to the rider, and woe to the steed,
Who fall in front of their mad stampede!

Was that thunder? No, by the Lord!
I sprang to my saddle without a word,
One foot on mine, and she clung behind.
Away! on a hot chase down the wind!
But never was fox-hunt half so hard,
And never was steed so little spared,
For we rode for our lives. You shall hear how we
fared

In Texas, down by the Rio Grande.

The mustang flew, and we urged him on:
There was one chance left, and you have but one:
Halt, jump to ground, and shoot your horse;
Crouch under his carcass and take your chance;
And if the steers in their frantic course
Don't batter you both to pieces at once,

You may thank your stars; if not, good-bye
To the quickening kiss and the long-drawn sigh,
And the open air and the open sky,
In Texas, down by the Rio Grande!

The cattle gained on us, and just as I felt
For my old six-shooter behind in my belt,
Down came the mustang, and down came we
Clinging together, and what was the rest?
A body that spread itself on my breast,
Two arms that shielded my dizzy head,
Two lips that hard on my lips were prest;
Then came thunder in my ears,
As over us surged the sea of steers,
Blows that beat blood into my eyes,
And when I could rise,
Lasca was dead.

I gouged out a grave a few feet deep,
And there in Earth's arms I laid her to sleep;
And there she is lying, and no one knows,
And the summer shines, and the winter snows;
For many a day the flowers have spread
A pall of petals over her head;
And the little grey lark hangs aloft in the air,
And the sly *coyote* trots here and there,
And the black snake glides and glitters and slides
Into a rift in a cotton-wood tree;
And the buzzard sails on,
And comes and is gone,
Stately and still, like a ship at sea;
And I wonder why I do not care
For things that are like the things that were.
Does half my heart lie buried there

In Texas, down by the Rio Grande?

FRANK DESPREZ.

By permission of the Author.

A WAY OUT OF IT.

"PRIVATE MOONEY, you're drunk!"
"Devil a bit of it, sargent!"
"I say you're a drunken blackguard!"
"No more a blaygyard than yourself, sargent—
savin' yer sthripes!"
"You're a liar, Mooney!"
Smack! Thud!
"Guard, turn out! Arrest that man!"
The sergeant has sprung to his feet. Denny
Mooney is seized by two files of his own comrades,
deprived of his belt and side arm, and clapped
under handcuffs in the tent that on the march
serves for guard-room.

Then he faces the situation, and it is so gloomy
that he who never has been known to quail at the
sight of steel or smoke groans as he thinks of it.
Court-martial, degradation, the stripes almost
within his grasp gone for ever, and the cat!

For his offence has happened in time of war—on the march across the Soudan desert, and the Articles of War are definite. Denny is done for. All his hopes are blighted; the goodwill of his comrades, the esteem of his officers, who have marked his "real grit"—these cannot save him from, these themselves will not survive, the disgrace of the triangle and the lash—will not heal the scars, the cruel thongs will make, not only on his back, but on his heart.

And so he sits brooding, brooding, while nothing save the tramp, tramp, receding, advancing, and again receding of the comrade on his sentry-go without the tent and the distant howl of a stray jackal break the stillness of the hot night. The brigade has halted, and, outside, round the campfires the boys of the Onety-Oneth are growling and swearing over Denny's bad luck and its inevitable consequences.

How hot the desert night wind blows into the tent! How does it come in such a body? What is that gleaming in the darkness? By Heaven, a star! One of the guy-ropes of the tent has given way, and the canvas is flapping wide open in the night breeze that blows hot as a panther's breath. If Denny could only detach these bracelets! He twists and wrenches and jerks at them till the iron bites in his flesh and his wrists are raw and bleeding. Snap! a flaw in the metal; one of them has gone. Concentrating all his muscular force, he has wrenched one hand free; the whole and the broken ring hang round the other wrist.

Stealthily he creeps through the aperture in the tent. In the darkness the watch-fires glimmer, scintillating on the bayonets of the sentries. Like a snake Denny writhes and crawls on the sand till at last he is clear of the lines; then, springing to his feet, he runs like a deer, and only halts when breathless; and there he stands, in seeming illimitable desert, alone with the stars.

Whither shall he pursue his journey? His purpose is vague; the only fixed point in it to escape the drumhead court-martial, the terrible triangle, and lash. He has some undefined notion of reaching the banks of the Nile, which he knows flows some twenty miles to the right—of being taken aboard some trading vessel. The rest is blank.

So he tramps on and on over the yielding sand. A deserter!—he who till yesterday was the smartest private in the ranks of the Onety-Oneth. How altered is all the map of his life by the events of one blinded minute! Curse the sergeant for calling him a liar!

What is that? A cloud resting on the horizon, and drifting nearer, nearer.

Denny falls prone and peers through the darkness across the ocean of sand towards what seems a distant ship upon it.

Troops! and natives, and moving in the direction of the encampment! A grey streak of dawn glimmers in the east, and Denny can see the pen-

nons on their lances; also little points against the rising light no bigger than pins, but which he sees are spears.

By skirting to the left he can escape them. But then the brigade? They may be surprised. Then he remembers he is an Irishman, a comrade of the men who are sleeping, unconscious of the advancing enemy; that he is a part, if an infinitesimal one, of the great system; a link, if a small one, of the chain that stretches over the earth—a soldier in the British Army. He will go back to the court-martial, to the lash, may be to the firing party. He will go back and raise the alarm.

To the right—about he turns. Trotting, walking, running; dead beat, but pressing on and on. The troops behind have halted—for the rest before the rush. There is yet time.

"Halt! Who goes there?" and a bayonet flashes in the starlight as the sentry brings his rifle to the point. "Stand! Who goes?"

"Deserter."

"Deserter, advance," and Denny, covered by the sentry's rifle, marches right up to the door of his own colonel's tent.

In a moment bugles are pealing; the brigade is in line. Denny, having told his story, asks his colonel, "Shall I go back to arrest, colonel?"

The colonel pauses a moment; then replies, "Not yet. Fall in with your company." And Denny is a soldier again. His heart beats high; perhaps a bullet or a spear may cheat the court-martial yet.

And now the enemy's line is visible against the roseate sky-line. It is going to be a surprise party, after all—only the surprise will be on the other side. They have the advantage of numbers, but our Gatlings will diminish that long before we get to close quarters. Not until the Soudanese are within rifle-range does the brigade give any sign. Then suddenly the seeming sleeping host springs into life, death-dealing life; a solid human line is thrown out across the plain from the right wing of which the Nordenfeldts belch out destruction. The Soudanese waver; then a banner is seen fluttering in their front. It has been blessed by the Mahdi; he who bears it will lead them either to victory or through death to Paradise.

On they come like a human torrent—to be met by a human rock, a solid British square; and as the waves from the rocks they recede, panting, exhausted, leaving their dead in their wake. So far there has been no clash of steel, only the rattle of musketry. Now the brigadier-general gives the order to open out; there is a merry clink along our line, and the bayonets flash in the now risen sun. The order to advance is given, the bugle peals out the "Charge!" then, with a wild cheer, our line, let loose, dashes on the panic-stricken foe.

The Onety-Oneth are in the middle of it, and Private Mooney, not being by any means a tall man, is in the middle of the Onety-Oneth. By his

side is the sergeant for striking whom he was arrested.

"It's hot work, Denny," says the sergeant, as for a moment he stands panting for breath.

"Allah il Allah!" A white-robed figure, furious as though possessed of demons, hurls itself upon him.

Clink! the spear is met by the bayonet—Denny's bayonet, which in a moment is under the spear, in another under the ribs beneath the flowing robes.

"Denny, boy, I'm sorry I called you a black-guard."

Private Mooney makes no answer; he is too busy for conversation. The blacks have made a stand, and are rallying round their sacred banner. Around it there is already a rampart of dead and dying. The Onety-Oneth have sworn to have that flag. Through the belt of brave men defending it with their lives one company of the regiment is working its way even as a steel screw bites and worms its way through timber. Foremost in its line is a man with smoke-blackened face, streaked here and there with blood; at every thrust of his sword-bayonet a native falls; at last he grapples the banner and wrests it from the hands of its dying bearer. A cheer rises from the brigade. The Soudanese, disorganised, broken, collapsed, turn and fly, save such of them as cannot escape the fleet death behind them.

Then the pursuers return to their base. The brigade is paraded; the colonel of the Onety-Oneth attends the brigadier-general, as he rides along their line.

"It's a terrible thing to have to put such a brave man under arrest," says the general. "But what can we do else?"

"There's no way out of it," says the colonel. "Insubordination, striking a superior officer, then desertion! We're bound hand and foot. He ought to get his stripes and the V.C., but we must satisfy the Articles of War."

Private Mooney is ordered twenty-five paces to the front. A murmur of pity and admiration travels along the line as he advances.

"Halt! Present! 'Shun! Private Mooney, I would to God I could spare you. You're a gallant soldier. You've saved us from a surprise; may be we owe this victory to you. You have fought like a hero. But," the old warrior bites the lip under his white moustache, "there is no way out of it. Duty is the soldier's all in all, whether he be a private or a commanding officer."

He gives the order for Denny's re-arrest; the sergeant, with tears in his eyes, orders two files to advance to the front to make it.

There is a way out of it, after all. As they march up to Private Dennis Mooney, he sinks back into their arms. Opening his tunic they see where the life blood is gushing fast away from a spear wound in his side.

There is a smile on his lips, though they are paling, as he murmurs—

"There's a way out of it, after all. The best way in the world, boys!"

And the general echoes, "The best way in the world!"

The smoke of the volley that is his comrades' last farewell has scarcely died away in the breathless air when the order to advance is given, and the brigade moves forward, leaving Private Dennis Mooney there in the desert, in a soldier's grave.

H. T. JOHNSON.

From CASSELL'S SATURDAY JOURNAL.

By permission of the Proprietors.

THE CLOUD.

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers

From the seas and from the streams;

I bring light shade for the leaves when laid

In their noonday dreams.

From my wings are shaken the dews that waken

The sweet buds every one,

When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,

As she dances about the sun.

I wield the flail of the lashing hail,

And whiten the green plains under;

And then again I dissolve it in rain,

And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,

And their great pines groan aghast;

And all the night 'tis my pillow white

While I sleep in the arms of the Blast.

Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers

Lightning my pilot sits;

In a cavern under is fettered the Thunder,

It struggles and howls at fits.

Over earth and ocean with gentle motion

This pilot is guiding me,

Lured by the love of the Genii that move

In the depths of the purple sea;

Over the rills and the crags and the hills,

Over the lakes and the plains,

Wherever he dream under mountain or stream

The Spirit he loves remains;

And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile,

While he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,

And his burning plumes outspread,

Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,

When the morning star shines dead:

As on the jag of a mountain-crag

Which an earthquake rocks and swings,

An eagle alit one moment may sit

In the light of its golden wings

And, when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea
beneath,

Its ardours of rest and of love,
And the crimson pall of eve may fall
From the depth of heaven above,
With wings folded I rest on mine airy nest,
As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden
Whom mortals call the Moon,
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor
By the midnight breezes strewn;
And wherever the beat of her unseen feet,
Which only the angels hear,
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,
The Stars peep behind her and peer.
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee
Like a swarm of golden bees,
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,—
Till the calm rivers, lakes, and seas,
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl;
The volcanoes are dim, and the Stars reel and swim,
When the Whirlwinds my banner unfurl.
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,
Over a torrent sea,
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof;
The mountain its columns be.
The triumphal arch through which I march,
With hurricane, fire, and snow,
When the Powers of the air are chained to my chair,
Is the million-coloured bow;
The Sphere-fire above its soft colours wove
While the moist Earth was laughing below.

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,
And the nursing of the Sky,
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores;
I change, but I cannot die.
For after the rain, when with never a stain,
The pavilion of heaven is bare,
And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams
Build up the blue dome of air,
I silently laugh at my own cenotaph,—
And out of the caverns of rain,
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,
I arise, and unbuild it again.

P. B. SHELLEY.

A LEGEND OF PAU.

HAUNTED, yonder house they show?

Ay, they tell me so—
Haunted by the ghost of her
Who, the chronicles aver,
(When in hideous overthrow
Centuries of guilt and error
Paid their reckoning to the Terror,)
Single victim here in Pau,
Died beneath the guillotine,
All for friendship with her queen!

Standing thus beneath her roof,
Hardly may we hold aloof
From those influences that throw
Chains to link the Then and Now;
And if we but chose remain
We might see the dead again,
(So the legend saith,)
See her clad in cloak and hood,
Calm and stately as she stood
Summoned to her death;

We might hear the rhythmic rap,
As the boards her shoe-heels tap;
We might scent the perfumed air
As she pass from room to stair;
We might hear her dress go sweeping
Down the staircase,—hear the weeping
Of her servants, passing whom
She goes forth to meet her doom,
She goes forth to meet her death,—
So at least the legend saith.
'Hush! and let the legend be;
Here is proof enough for me.
We are standing by the dead!
Doff the hat and bow the head.

See yon volume, worn and yellow,
Age has left it dusty,
Rose-leaves made its odour mellow,
Damp has turned it musty;
'Tis her diary, duly kept.
Mark the very words she wrote,—
See the stain of tears she wept,
When she found no more to note,
That might fitly follow this:
(Writ in bitter grief, I wis!)
"She's my friend, and she's my queen,
Died beneath the guillotine!"

Ay! the volume holds mine eyes,
Till I straightway see uprise
All that scene of long ago:—
Even lifetime's ebb and flow,
Peaceful promise quenched in woe.
Leave the legend; let it be,
While I tell you what I see.

Through the casement comes a perfume, jessamine
*or mignonette,
Fills the chamber, fills the staircase; I can almost
smell it yet!

I can see her, fresh and dainty, clad in muslin,
swathed in lace,—

Eyes perchance a trifle weary, manner born of
languid grace,

Scribbling as the fancy takes her, in yon yellow
diary,

Noting down with quaint precision little facts that
underlie

Every simple lifetime's story,—noting further now
and then,

Horrors done in far-off Paris to her fellow-country-
men ;

Till the gathering influences of that lurid atmo-
sphere

Set their seal on lips and forehead,—bitter, loath-
ing, restless fear ;

Less of self the diary noteth, more of others,—then
at last

I can hear across the pages how her tears are
falling fast :

"Died this day upon the scaffold, she my queen
and best of friends !"

Follows here a long hiatus, and the broken record
ends.

Maybe sometimes she reflected, as she watched the
sun go down,

Refuge might be had for seeking, in some country
not her own ;

Should she fly before the tempest,—fly to safety,
fly to ease ?

Youthward lay the Spanish frontier, southward
stretched the Pyrenees.

Yet, what boots it, ease or safety, if the thoughts
you cherished most

Lie across the mountain-passes ? You are but an
exiled ghost !

Did she ponder so, I wonder ? Nothing further
standeth writ

In the diary's yellow volume, since her tears had
watered it.

But I see her pacing slowly all a-down a prison stair,
Folded lace across her bosom, filmy powder in her
hair,

Calmness in her stately movements, self-possession
in her eyes,

Such as smote her ruffian gaolers with a sense of
strange surprise ;

She an aristocrat by breeding, she blue-blooded to
the bone,

Shamed them, all against their natures, merely by
her courteous tone.

Last I see her bound and taken, as a felon she
might be,

Through the streets—no charge save this one ;
noble birth and pedigree ;—

But the State had done with nobles ! so the people
raged and spat,

Swarmed around with hideous yells and cursed her
for an aristocrat.

Very calmly she moved onward,—just a shade of
fine contempt

In her gaze,—from which the sweetest had not
wholly been exempt !

So I see her climb the scaffold, step that faltered
not nor failed,

Mien that neither changed nor lowered, steadfast
eyes that never quailed

As she raised them, proudly smiling,—and she
blessed the guillotine

That would give her death the same as it had given
her friend and queen !

Still, you urge, the generations earned their own
exceeding curse.

True—yet they, the slaughtered victims, if no
better were no worse

Than the thousands who had tampered, scatheless,
with mistake and crime.

Mark you, I am not defending scandals that dis-
graced the time,

Monstrous powers o'er life and labour, hateful
rights of privilege,

Which had pushed an ignorant patience towards
endurance' utmost edge.

Plagues there were that needed purging, tyrant
laws demanding change,

Wail and misery and corruption through the
country's farthest range ;

But their willingness to perish for a state of things
effete,—

Courage that would carry its colours in the face of
dire defeat,

And that calmness in the dying, here was not the
surest sign

That a class (self-styled the upper) it were time to
undermine.

Nay ! the peril is no mean one, when a storm is
driving swift,

Straight to steer across the current where the
wreck is going adrift ;

Yet the deed is worth the doing. Certes, 'tis no
splendid thing

To desert a friend down-trodden just because he be
a king !

Friends may claim their friendship's pledges, none
the less that they be crowned,

And you will not save your country at the price of
claims disowned.

Bigots ? Granted ; but these bigots die for that to
which they cling ;—

We, who boast the newer culture, would we die
for anything ?

He who dares to cling to something, better he than
those who wait

Anxiously revolving questions, till all action prove
too late,—

He who dies for love of some one, better he than
those who live

Floating in a mist of feelings with no energy to give !

So at least to me it seemeth; and this thought will
linger yet
(Though the legend be as doubtful as the scent of
mignonette;
Both perchance a dreamer's fancy!)—linger, while
yon yellow page—
Record breathing this before all: "Other manners,
other age,"—
Brings her back, the high-born lady, gently
nurtured, free and fair,
Execrated and insulted, dying,—while the people
glare,
Dying calmly, dying proudly, never stooping to
belie
Cause, or class, or royal friend,—ay! glad to
testify and die;
For she took her Faith and set it on her forehead
as a gem,
And such Faith, to stand or fall by, is methinks a
diadem.

H. L. CHILDE-PEMBERTON.

From "*In a Tuscan Villa.*"
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THE RISE AND FALL OF SMACKTON.

"It's a very pretty place," said John Billikin, the rich maltster.

"A perfect gem of the ocean!" exclaimed Torquato Simpson, the æsthetic poet.

"And offers a splendid scope for building sites," added Tom Spandrel, the young architect.

And certainly on that bright day Smackton had a very attractive aspect. It was a tiny seaside village, almost exclusively inhabited by fishermen and their boats—hence its name. It lay half-hidden in a little bay, very much out of the beaten track, on the east coast of Cliffshire. It was seldom marked down in maps, or more than casually mentioned in the guide-books of that large and flourishing watering-place, Widemouth, seven miles off. But John Billikin was much taken with Smackton.

"It only wants to be known, you know," he said.

"To know it is to love it!" exclaimed the poet.

"I think there is something to be made of it," said Billikin.

"I am sure there is," acquiesced the architect, thinking of future "plans" and "specifications."

These two young men always agreed with Billikin, for he had great possessions, while they were rich only in intellect and good intentions. Besides, they were "looking after" the daughters of the family—Misses Victoria and Alexandra Billikin.

John Billikin was a self-made man, who had

amassed a large fortune out of "Billikin's British Bottled Beers"—advertised, each with a big big B, on all the hoardings in Great Britain. He had a fine house, with extensive grounds, at St. Athelstane's, half way between Widemouth and Smackton. To this estate, which he had bought of a bankrupt baronet, the Billikin family removed every summer. So that he was a landed proprietor of the district, and if he chose to "take up" a place like Smackton, he might "be the making of it."

The idea grew in his mind. Billikin was ambitious, and longed to do something that would even increase his present celebrity, and hand his name down to posterity. As Romulus founded Rome, so would John Billikin become the founder of Smackton; and he was much better provided than Romulus, who probably started his great capital with no capital at all. Billikin entered into the project heart and soul. Tom Spandrel kept him up to it, and wouldn't let him rest until he had taken up a large plot of land near the village, and begun to build a new street of houses and a "Grand Hotel." People thought Billikin was mad, to enter into such a wild spec, and they regarded it as a mere fad, bound to end in failure and disaster.

The scheme was very artfully worked. The poet Simpson, who was also connected with the prosaic press, wrote a most "soulful and intense" ode dwelling on the beauties of Smackton, and hailing it as a sort of seventh heaven by the sea. Gusher, of the *Daily Record*, was equally hysterical in impassioned prose, and told his 200,000 readers, in strict confidence, the whereabouts of this new Eden—only they must keep the matter quite dark, lest the place should be overrun and spoilt by cheap trippers. The bait took; for you have only to describe a place as "quiet and exclusive," and this will bring down a crowd of visitors, who soon put an end to its quiet and exclusiveness. The true Cockney excursionist, though he prefers his maritime resorts to be like so many noisy Londons-by-the-Sea, resents any attempts at an aristocratic monopoly of pretty places.

So the next week saw a great number of visitors to Smackton. Some were indeed charmed with its peaceful picturesqueness; others could see nothing in it, and thought it a downright "take in," after the glowing accounts they had heard. However, Billikin went on building till an entire street was completed. He succeeded in letting most of the houses to retired business people, half-pay officers, and old ladies who let apartments. The new shops on the other side were also taken, the foundations of the Grand Hotel were laid; business was looking up. John Billikin, being very hospitable, was always inviting some local or London celebrities to St. Athelstane's, and these were so well entertained that they couldn't help praising their host and his family right and left,

and enlarging on the delights of Smackton. If the place seemed a little disappointing at first, they were met by the explanation that it was "only in its infancy."

A flaming prospectus was soon issued of the Smackton-on-Sea Development Company, Limited, with Billikin's name conspicuous among the directors. But speculators were rather shy. Though Smackton had been so extensively "boomed," it had its enemies and detractors. People who were interested in Widemouth, or other popular watering-places, pooh-poohed Smackton as an upstart, and determined that this "rising seaside resort" should never take a rise out of them. They declared that it had drawbacks by the dozen, while its attractions were few or none. It was an awfully difficult place to get at, there was no railway within ten miles, and when the steamboat company at length agreed to have one of their vessels call there daily, it was found that the bay was too shallow, and the passengers had to be landed in boats.

"We must build a pier," said Tom Spandrel. Billikin agreed, and Tom set to work on an elaborate design for this great achievement. "The Smackton Pier and Pavilion Company" next figured on a prospectus which was a triumph of special pleading.

At all events, a good start had been made, and the next season Smackton's popularity increased. Artists came there to sketch the fishermen, their wives, children, huts, and smacks. Photographers "took shots" at the bay, the town, and the sea, and quiet people with young families saw the advantage of there being no tall cliffs to tumble over.

In the winter season the "Royal Marine Baths" had been finished, and were opened by the summer. Local papers—and especially the new *Smackton Chronicle*, edited by Torquato Simpson—drew attention to the enormous advantages the place had for bathers. Local doctors discovered that the air was more invigorating than on any other part of the coast.

Every day something was done to add to the attractions. The Grand Hotel, though rather "run up," was completed the second season, and was soon filled with (comparatively) aristocratic visitors. The Assembly Rooms were next opened by a distinguished baronet, who was also a J.P. and an M.P., and the townspeople were lucky enough to get a real live lord to come down and lay the foundation-stone of the pier; and his lordship made a joke about "an old peer" and "the new pier" which was quite refreshing and original. But building a pier is a slow and laborious undertaking, and very often the works were stopped for lack of necessary funds. A large tract of waste ground was also purchased, and laid out as a public park; but this is still more a work of time, for it would be years and years before the transplanted saplings

would grow into stately trees. Billikin's name figured everywhere. He was the boss of the place. He not only planted the "memorial tree" in the park, but opened the new Public Library, and subscribed largely to the lifeboat, which was launched with a great flourish of trumpets, and christened by Mrs. Billikin. Admirers of the great man suggested that the town itself should be re-christened "Billikinsville," but practically it was found that life is too short for names like that. However, the principal street was Billikin-street, the park was Billikin Park, the lifeboat was the Billikin, and at the entrance of the library was a big and beautiful bust of Billikin in bronze. He looked forward with pride and hope to the time when Smackton would be about the size of Brighton, and he should be hailed as "Sir John Billikin, M.P., Mayor of Smackton."

In three years this "popular resort" certainly reached what Simpson called "the apogee of its zenith." But the worst of it was that the place was still "only in its infancy." Many of the public buildings were still in progress, the trees were still like shrubs, and Smackton still looked "an unfinished neighbourhood."

Alas! there now arrived the dark days of disaster. The fourth season was a very rainy one, and this kept away many visitors. The boasted "New Branch Line"—literally one line, with trains going to and fro about once every four hours—did not pay, and steamers ceased to come to the bay, for there seemed no chance of the pier being completed.

The town band on the Grand Parade played to very small audiences, and the travelling nigger troupe packed up and moved on to Widemouth. The weather improved later on, and a wonderful new spring of water having been discovered in the park, attracted some attention, and was welcomed as a sweet boon to the town. But, unfortunately, the spring proved only too copious, and once set going, it flowed and flowed till it swamped the park and flooded the west end of the town, doing considerable damage.

The following winter was a severe one. In October occurred one of the most violent storms on record. The sea rose "mountains high," wrecked the foundations of the pier, broke the new breakwater, and utterly annihilated the Royal Marine Baths. It then invaded the Grand Parade, smashed all the shop windows, flooded the houses, and drove the inhabitants to the upper town. Billikin, who had a large share in these buildings, was one of the greatest sufferers, in purse as well as in mind, for it seemed to him that fate was, after all, against his pet enterprise.

"If this goes on," he groaned, "another year will see the place and all of us ruined!"

It proved very nearly the mournful fact. The 19th of March, the next year, was the great day of disaster for Smackton. The weather had been

stormy all the week, but on that particular day it "surpassed itself." The Smacktonians retired to bed in fear and trembling, expecting their dwellings to be "stove in" every minute.

An hour before midnight came a universal "crash"—worse than any thunder-clap—worse than the fire of a besieging force of great guns. "An earthquake! An earthquake!" cried the bewildered and terrified inhabitants, escaping from their falling houses, and hastening into the streets in the most unstudied attire. It was a mercy any of them escaped at all. Twenty-four houses in Billikin Street, and ever so many more in other parts, experienced such a shock that the furniture and window-panes were smashed, the walls rent across, chimney-pots came crashing down, and each building became a miniature Leaning Tower of Pisa. The roof of the Grand Hotel fell in bodily, and injured ten people. The alarm was given, and the scene in Smackton that night was never to be forgotten by even the shortest memories.

Billikin was sent for at St. Athelstane's, and came post haste to the scene of the disaster. Spandrel and Simpson accompanied him, but nothing could be done but take the injured to the nearest hospital, and give thanks that nobody was dead.

"It's a landslip, and a severe one," exclaimed Spandrel. "I have always told you I was afraid the soil was too sandy."

"Providence is against me!" groaned John Billikin.

"This scene reminds me of the ruins of Carthage!" exclaimed Simpson, who spoke as if he had been there at the time. And, like Carthage, Smackton had indeed met its doom.

"This is a terrible blow to the prosperity of the place," observed Gusher, who arrived at noon that day to report the disaster in the *Record*.

"Blow? It's a smasher!" cried Billikin.

"The place will lose its high reputation. It will come down very much," proceeded Gusher.

"It's pretty well all down already!" replied the wretched Billikin, looking round on the scene of desolation.

That was the last "season" at Smackton. Its decline, reversing the usual process, came after its fall. People who had been driven out of their houses left the place. Nobody would live in a locality subject to such visitations. Even if the houses were rebuilt, who would become a tenant, at the risk of the buildings themselves, as well as the leases, "falling in"?

For a time visitors crowded, out of curiosity, to see the "ruins," but after that excursionists, with one accord, shunned the spot. It was as perilous as visiting Vesuvius in its days of "activity." Nobody could ever arrive at a true estimate of the enormous damage done. There was no compensation to be had, for nobody was to blame.

Billikin was the greatest sufferer, but he felt as much sorrow as anger, for though his hopes were destroyed, and he had lost a fearful amount of money, he still loved the place. It had become very dear to him. However, he couldn't remain near it after such a calamity, so he sold his estate at St. Athelstane's, and migrated to the Midlands.

Smackton is again a mere fishing village, and has gained nothing by its brief "boom" beyond a "dangerous" reputation.

MORAL.—Sanguine hopes and sandy foundations are bad things to build upon.

WALTER PARKE.

By permission of the Author.

THE ISLES OF GREECE.

THE isles of Greece, the isles of Greece!

Where burning Sappho loved and sung,

Where grew the arts of war and peace—

Where Delos rose, and Phœbus sprung,

Eternal summer gilds them yet,

But all, except their sun, is set.

The Scian and the Teian muse,

The hero's harp, the lover's lute,

Have found the fame your shores refuse;

Their place of birth alone is mute

To sounds which echo further west

Than your sires' "Islands of the Blest."

The mountains look on Marathon—

And Marathon looks on the sea;

And musing there an hour alone,

I dream'd that Greece might still be free;

For standing on the Persian's grave,

I could not deem myself a slave.

A king sate on the rocky brow

Which looks o'er sea-born Salamis;

And ships, by thousands, lay below,

And men in nations;—all were his!

He counted them at break of day—

And when the sun set where were they?

And where are they? and where art thou,

My country? On thy voiceless shore

The heroic lay is tuneless now—

The heroic bosom beats no more!

And must thy lyre, so long divine,

Degenerate into hands like mine?

'Tis something, in the dearth of fame,

Though link'd among the fetter'd race,

To feel at least a patriot's shame,

Even as I sing, suffuse my face;

For what is left the poet here?

For Greeks a blush—for Greeks a tear.

Must we but weep o'er days more blest?
 Must we but blush? Our fathers bled.
 Earth! render back from out thy breast
 A remnant of our Spartan dead!
 Of the three hundred grant but three,
 To make a new Thermopylæ!

What, silent still, and silent all?
 Ah! no;—the voices of the dead
 Sound like a distant torrent's fall,
 And answer, "Let one living head,
 But one arise—we come, we come!"
 'Tis but the living who are dumb.

In vain—in vain: strike other chords:
 Fill high the cup with Samian wine!
 Leave bottles to the Turkish hordes,
 And shed the blood of Soio's vine!
 Hark! rising to the ignoble call,
 How answers each bold Bacchanal?

You have the Pyrrhic dance, as yet,
 Where is the Pyrrhic phalanx gone?
 Of two such lessons, why forget
 The nobler and the manlier one?
 You have the letters Cadmus gave—
 Think ye he meant them for a slave?

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 We will not think of themes like these!
 It made Anacreon's song divine:
 He served—but served Polycrates—
 A tyrant; but our masters then
 Were still, at least, our countrymen.

The tyrant of the Chersonese
 Was freedom's best and bravest friend:
 That tyrant was Miltiades!
 Oh! that the present hour would lend
 Another despot of the kind!
 Such chains as his were sure to bind.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 On Suli's rock and Parga's shore,
 Exists the remnant of a line
 Such as the Doric mothers bore;
 And there, perhaps, some seed is sown,
 The Heracleidan blood might own.

Trust not for freedom to the Franks—
 They have a king who buys and sells;
 In native swords and native ranks,
 The only hope of courage dwells;
 But Turkish force and Latin fraud
 Would break your shield, however broad.

Fill high the bowl with Samian wine!
 Our virgins dance beneath the shade—
 I see their glorious black eyes shine;
 But gazing on each glowing maid,
 My own the burning tear-drop laves,
 To think such breasts must suckle slaves.

Place we on Sunium's marbled steep,
 Where nothing, save the waves and I,
 May hear our mutual murmurs sweep;
 There, swan-like, let me sing and die;
 A land of slaves shall ne'er be mine—
 Dash down yon cup of Samian wine!

LORD BYRON.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA.

THERE'S many an aching heart ashore, and many a
 tear at sea,
 When headstrong youth leaves home behind, a
 mariner to be!

Deceived by pleasant stories told of life before the
 mast,
 A blue-eyed boy, his mother's pride, ran off to sea
 at last.
 Long had she thwarted his design, but youth will
 have its way;
 A simple missive she received, which made her rue
 the day.

The good ship *Ellen* sped along towards India's
 distant strand,
 As trim a craft as ever left a shipwright's master
 hand;
 And the lounging sailors gaily sang, while the
 breeze blew fresh and strong,
 But one there was who thought of home, and
 heeded not their song.

No pride he took in the dainty ship, whose sails,
 like wings outspread,
 Were white as foam on the crested wave, or the
 sunlit sky o'erhead;
 He thought of his mother, sad and lone, and the
 tears he could not stay,
 Lent a pathos to the tuneful song of those whose
 hearts were gay.

But soon, as the sun sank in the west, the veering
 wind rose high,
 Portentous clouds each other chased in the sombre
 evening sky;
 Then the storm came down and smote the ship all
 helpless in the brine,
 And every man on board prepared his spirit to
 resign.

Now perched aloft on the mountain wave, now
 traversing the vale,
 Borne down with a rush like a leaden weight, in
 the fierce nor'-eastern gale,
 Now dashed upon her beam, and then—a dreary
 wreck was she;
 All vain to hope that any craft could live in such
 a sea.

Her opening timbers creaked and groaned as
through that fearful night
The tempest on that hapless ship expended all its
might;
To rattling shrouds the seamen clung, until a
whooping wave
Swept the mast with all its human freight into a
watery grave.

The boy alone was left on deck when day began to
dawn,
Sole monarch of the sinking ship on peaceful waters
borne;
The storm had ceased, but not a sail was anywhere
in sight;
The stoutest heart might well have quailed in such
a dreadful plight!

"O God!" he cried, "must I then die and bid the
world farewell,
With no kind friend surviving me, the dismal tale
to tell!"
And his heart went out to that widowed soul left
sorrowing o'er his fate;
On her account alone he wept in his forsaken
strait.

On the margin of a printed sheet a hurried line he
penned,
His sole concern this last farewell his mother dear
to send:
"May God preserve and comfort you, though lone
your life will be
When some day, perhaps, there comes to hand this
message from the sea!"

In a bottle then, securely sealed, he placed the
tearful note,
With straining eyes till out of sight he watched it
gently float,
And offered up a silent prayer that it might reach
the shore,
And be conveyed to his mother dear when he
should be no more.

At last the ship, quite water-logged, its rest on the
sea-bed found,
But God had willed, in His wondrous way, the boy
should not be drowned.
With a prayerful heart he cast himself adrift on a
floating spar,
And soon descried a sail bear down upon him from
afar.

A year elapsed before he reached Old England once
again;
With lightsome step he hurried home to ease his
mother's pain.
Alack-a-day! his search was vain, and joy was
turned to gloom,
For the dear old soul, bereft of life, now rested in
the tomb.

There's many an aching heart ashore, and many a
tear at sea,
When headstrong youth leaves home behind, a
mariner to be!

LEOPOLD WAGNER.

From the *BRITISH WORKMAN*.

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ON GIRLS.

GIRLS, like the poor, are always with us. They constitute one of Providence's most merciful dispensations. How thankful we should be for them! I really do not think I could exist at Brighton and places of that kind where there is no shooting or fishing—unless you call it "fishing" to go out with a cart-ropes, a meat-hook, and a lying longshoreman, and be sick in an open boat—if it were not for Girls. By all means let us spell them with a capital letter; they deserve it, bless them! But let us beware of writing capital letters to them, because they will not appreciate them in the first place, and, in the second, there is a class of correspondence which, when read out in Court, is compromising. Of course, the very young man writes very young love letters, into which he decants his whole soul, so to speak. He only leaves the dregs in the bottle as it were, and holds the decanter up to the light to see if it is quite bright. But in early days the "whole soul," or what is apprehended of it by its owner, does not amount to much; perhaps hardly to a row of peas. If the letter be particularly silly, it may be that the Girl recipient will read it over two or three times, and perhaps put it under her pillow. It is only when we grow older, and can really throw off two or three hundred words in a nice, chatty, epigrammatic, and complimentary style, that we should husband our resources, and not press flowers of elegant diction between sheets of notepaper that may perhaps come to be read out in Court—with the accents in the wrong places.

As I began by saying, Girls are always with us, and the reason that I have chosen them as the subject of these remarks is that, while even the humblest among us is not exempt from their influence, there seems to be no hand-book or text-book in existence which can give a succinct notion to the earnest inquirer of the best means of dealing with this interesting variety of our species. Let it not be supposed that, when the end of this lecture has been reached, I have exhausted all I know about Girls. On the contrary, these remarks merely embody a summary of one of the chapters of one of the sections of my forthcoming great work entitled "Woman."

With regard to Girls, it must be recognised to start with that little or nothing is known of their

real inwardness. Little can be gained by the ordinary student even by applying to his married friends for information. Indeed, even supposing that a married man were so lost to all sense of decency as to betray his wife's confidences, I question whether he would be able to throw much light on the subject of Girls; since a Girl on the day of her marriage ceases *ipso facto* to be one, and her ideas become confused, and she is apt to make mistakes, and is, anyhow, bound to be prejudiced. All that I know of Girls has been acquired by honest work and observation. In this matter I am an entirely self-made man. Years ago my father gave me clearly to understand that I need expect no assistance from him over this course. And yet he was usually very generous, and always ready to share what he possessed. One cardinal point I have arrived at. Girls chiefly subsist on tight lacing and afternoon tea. I am told they have occasionally been known to refuse food in the daytime and hoist in cold provisions during the silent watches of the night. But for this I cannot personally vouch, though a certain colour is lent to the theory by the fact that at a supper given anywhere at or after midnight, Girls, if present, will invariably eat more than men.

Another fact that I have ascertained, as near as may be, but not quite so cardinally as the last, is that a good deal of their time is spent in thinking how they look, and in elaborate calculations as to whether their modest toilette is not on the whole more effective than the elaborate "get up" of Mrs. So-and-so. They do not realise that, provided a woman be good-looking and wholesome (looking), the ordinary male does not nicely balance considerations of millinery and relative cost, but, if he fancies Mrs. So-and-so, will just sail right in and endeavour to hypnotise her for all he is worth.

Girls are made to be admired but not to be intellectual companions. You should look at them, and tame ones may even be touched; but you should not talk to them. They may be seen in large quantities outside bonnet shops of an afternoon, when they may be approached quite closely by any naturalist who desires to observe their habits, if he takes pains to avoid startling them. Girls are sometimes engaged to be married to shallow men. When this is the case they do not shop any more assiduously than before, but they spend more money. They always live in towns if they can; when far removed and kept permanently away from shops they pine away and die.

Girls have a particular genius for taking infinite pains over the Unnecessary. In some it takes the form of a passion for blind and mechanical punctuality. They will sacrifice anything and everybody to the satisfaction of having gone to bed (whether sleepy or not), or sat down to meals (whether hungry or not) to time, simply because the stereotyped moment had arrived for doing these things. For-

tunately, these specimens are rare, and only a little less rare than the painfully punctual man, who is always insufferable, because he is too much occupied in the slavish compliance with his own absurd time-table to give himself the opportunity of improving his mind.

This capacity for taking pains has been selfishly exploited by unscrupulous men, and therefore you see all the meanest kind of drudgery in the world performed by Girls. But I am quite sure that they ought to do no work whatever. I even doubt whether they ought to be taught to read—though reading might, perhaps, amuse them when they get old. Certainly they ought not to be taught to write.

When one thinks of the thousands and thousands of Girls—a great proportion of them very young and pretty—all toiling and molling away at tailoring, cigar-making, envelope-folding, binding, button-holing, lucifer-match making, fur-pulling, and the countless occupations which in London take the bloom from their cheeks and bring in only starvation wages—when one thinks of these poor Girls it is difficult not to feel indignant. What ought to be done is to take them and wash them beautifully clean, and attire them in neat frocks and send them in groups about the town, so that the men, who would gladly work for them double hours rather than let their pretty hands be spoiled by stitching, scrubbing, and such navvy's work, might get glimpses of beauty and grace amid the desert of bricks and mortar, and bless God that they were alive.

If any Girls remained over after London had been properly provided for, a few might be sent down to Brighton, where I am now residing. Their presence would supply a long-felt want.

PERCY REEVE.

By permission of the Author.

MY DEAR OLD GRANDMAMA.

THERE hangs her picture—by the clock—

As life-like as could be;

Sometimes indeed, when I look up,

It seems to speak to me!

Love sparkles in those kindly eyes,

And smooths that wrinkled brow;—

Ah me! what would I give to have

My dear old Grandma now!

I never knew those lips to breathe

A single hasty word;

And there, she had the sweetest voice

I think I ever heard.

Those folded hands, and silvery curls,

That brooch, and white lace frill,

Complete the picture, till 'twould seem

Her spirit dwelt there still!

From her I learnt to say my prayers,
 And learnt my A B C ;
 And wrote down in my copy-book
 That cat was C A T ;—
 I spelt words of one syllable,
 And counted up to ten ;—
 Ah me ! I sometimes think I've known
 But care and toil since then !

They all come rushing back to me—
 Those hours of infant bliss,
 When life's blue sky bore not a cloud,
 And pain fled at a kiss !
 Here, in this same old room, we'd sit
 On winter evenings, say,
 And through the window-curtains watch
 The fast declining day.

And when 'twas dark she'd trim the lamp,
 And stir the embers bright ;
 Then taking out her spectacles,
 Would hold them to the light ;—
 When they were cleaned she'd fetch my chair,
 Then lift me gently in ;
 And telling me to sit quite still,
 Would, coughing first, begin.

She'd shew me pretty picture-books,
 Full of the queerest things ;
 With ostriches, and tall giraffes,
 And fish, possessing wings ;
 Or some great hippopotamus,
 Or ugly chimpanzee ;—
 My dear old grandma didn't know
 They always frightened me !

Those Æsop's Fables, too, were fine—
 I'd jump up in my chair,
 To listen to the race between
 The tortoise and the hare !
 Or heard the story of a witch,
 That travelled on a broom ;
 Till in my childish fears I thought
 I saw one in the room !

But, best of all, I loved to hear
 Some strange old Bible tale ;
 Like Moses and the burning bush,
 Or Jonah in the whale ;
 Or when the she-bears killed those boys
 Who mocked Elisha's head ;—
 "Take warning by their dreadful fate !"
 My dear old grandma said.

We'd sometimes ramble through the woods
 To gather ferns and flowers ;
 And then she'd talk of God's great love,
 And Nature's wondrous powers ;—
 We'd listen to the birds' glad songs,
 Or watch their homeward flight ;—
 Ah me ! I wish that now, as then,
 My heart felt half so light !

One day the house was dark and quiet,
 Friends whispered in their fears ;
 My mother kissed me, and I saw
 Her eyes were filled with tears.
 She led me to a room upstairs,
 And took me to the bed ;—
 Child as I was, I knew the truth—
 My grandmama was dead !

For days and days life was a blank—
 Those hours of bliss were flown ;
 And though fond fingers stroked my hair,
 I felt I was alone !
 It was so hard to seek in vain
 The face I held so dear,
 And harder still to miss the voice
 I hoped once more to hear !

Those folded hands and smiling lips
 Have crumbled into dust ;
 Those eyes are closed—but still I keep
 My memory's sacred trust !
 For though that picture should decay,
 And fortune fickle prove,
 Naught, for my dear old grandmama,
 Could ever change my love !

J. REDDIE MALLET.

A Chapter from "A Life's History, told in Homely Verse."
 By permission of the Author. Published by Messrs.
 RICHARD BENTLEY & SON.

ADMIRAL BIMBLE, K.C.B.

I sing the song in tuneful numbers
 Of Admiral Bimble, K.C.B.,
 Who now in Plymouth Churchyard slumbers
 Deceased, too soon, at eighty-three.

For a youthful man was Wargrave Bimble,
 Respected Admiral of the White,
 As any powder-monkey nimble,
 And ever foremost in the fight.

His cheeks were never blanched with pallor,
 Though cannon-balls flew round like birds ;
 He was a man of dauntless valour,
 A man of action more than words.

How did he come to grief, you wonder ?
 How was he cut off in his prime ?
 What snapt the thread of life asunder ?
 What knocked old Bimble out of time ?

'Twas thus. The Fleet lay off Bouloing—
 I cannot say what took it there—
 And Wargrave took the chance of going
 On shore to get a change of air.

For a change of air he badly needed,
 Having been at least a week at sea,
 And if ever a man worked hard, why he did
 Although he was a K.C.B.

He sought for simple relaxation
From all his high position's care,
And soon obtained the information
That he would find it at the fair,

Which then, in all its giddy brightness,
Was based upon the ramparts held;
The Admiral, with his boyish lightness,
To frolic felt himself impelled.

So up he skipped while Frenchmen wondered,
And muttered low, "*Quel grand vieux homme !*"
With reckless sows the stalls he plundered
Of macaroons and *sucre de pomme*.

He patronised the special features
Of gay Bouloing's far-famed fair;
Beheld deformed and other creatures,
And women with abnormal hair.

He played *roulette* for china prizes,
He had his fling at *rouge et noir*;
He bought a mask and strange disguises;
He had *à manger et à boire*.

Just when he thought about retiring,
Refreshed, indeed, beyond his hope,
He saw a crowd of folks admiring
A man who walked a lofty rope.

It seemed a risky occupation,
Even to one who'd been to sea;
Wargrave was filled with emulation;
"I'll have a try at that!" cried he.

"You'd better not," said Signor Liro,
The "Equilibrist"; "you *might* fall."
"I've said I *will*," replied the hero;
"An Admiral's word's beyond recall.

"I've staked the honour of the Navy;
Besides, I am a K.C.B.—
I swear upon my affidavit
That none of you shall hinder me."

Then up he climbed—the fearless Bimble—
And placed his foot upon the rope;
I've said before that he was nimble,
But this thing seemed beyond his scope.

He'd gone, it's generally reckoned
By those who witnessed what occurred,
One step and nearly half the second,
When he capsized, without a word,
And fell upon the ground below him,
A distance of some seven feet;
A noble subject for a poem—
This mangled Admiral of the Fleet!

They took him home in a gorgeous coffin,
With Union Jack and wreaths bedecked;
The stricken Fleet stayed in the offing,
As far as I can recollect.

In Plymouth Churchyard they dug one more
grave

(There was scarcely room that one could see),
And in it they lowered Bimble Wargrave,
An Admiral, and a K.C.B.

W. SAPTE, Jun.

By permission of the Author.

CLUB-HOUSE ETIQUETTE.

THERE have recently been published several very edifying works upon "Etiquette," and the mode of behaving well in company. As no book touching the conduct of club society has yet appeared, and this is the season of the year at which those admirable institutions are making weekly acquisitions in the shape of new members, I have thought it might be neither superfluous nor disagreeable to give the recently-admitted candidates a few leading rules for their behaviour, in the way of directions. Thus:

In the first place, find fault with everything, and bully the waiters. What do you pay your subscriptions for, but to secure that privilege? Abuse the Committee for mismanagement, until you get into it yourself—then abuse everybody else.

Never shut the door of any room into which you may go, or out of which you may come.

When the evening papers arrive, pounce upon three; keep one in your hand reading, and another under your arm, ready to relieve that; and sit down upon a third. By this means you possess yourself of the opinions of all parties, without being influenced by any one.

If you wish to dine early and cheap, order some cold meat just before three o'clock—it will then be charged as luncheon—bread, pickles, &c., gratis. Drink table-beer, because, as the Scotch gentleman said of something very different, "It is vary pleasant, and costs nothing."

If you dine on the joint, get it first, and cut all the best parts off, and help yourself to twice as much as you want, for fear you should never see it again.

If you are inclined to read the newspaper when you have finished your meat, make use of the cheese as a reading-desk; it is very convenient, and, moreover, makes the paper small of the cheese, and the cheese taste of the paper.

If you come in, and see a man whom you know dining quietly by himself, or two men dining sociably together, draw your chair to their table, and volunteer to join them. This they cannot well refuse, although they may wish you at Old Scratch. Then call for the bill of fare, and order your dinner, which as the others had half done before your arrival, will not be served till they have quite

finished theirs. This will enable them to enjoy the gratification of seeing you proceed through the whole of your meal, from soup to cheese inclusive, while they are eating their fruit and sipping their wine.

If you drink tea, call for a "cup" of tea; when the waiter has brought it, abuse him for its being too strong, and desire him to fetch an empty cup and a small jug of boiling water; then divide the tea into the two cups, and fill both up with the water. By this method you get two cups of tea for the price of one. N.B.—The milk and sugar not charged for.

If you are a literary man, always write your books at the club—pen, ink, and paper gratis, a circumstance which of itself is likely to make your productions profitable.

When there is a ballot, blackball everybody you do not happen to know. If a candidate is not one of your own personal acquaintance, he cannot be fit to come there.

If you are interested about a friend, post yourself directly in front of his balloting-box, and pester everybody, whether you know them or not, to give him a vote; this, if pertinaciously adhered to, will invariably settle his fate, one way or the other.

Always walk about the coffee-room with your hat on, to show your own independence, and your respect for the numerous noblemen and gentlemen who are sitting at dinner without theirs.

When you are alone in any of the rooms where writing materials are deposited, help yourself to covers, note-paper, sealing-wax, and black-lead pencils at discretion; they are as much yours as any other member's, and, as you contribute to pay for them, what difference can it make whether you use them at the club or at home?

When you go away, if it is a wet night, and you are without a cloak or great-coat, take the first that fits you; you can send it back in the morning when it is fine: remember you do. This rule applies equally to umbrellas.

Never pay your subscription till the very last day fixed by the regulations; why should the trustees get the interest of your money for two or three months? Besides, when strangers come in to see the house, they will find your name over the fireplace, which will show that you belong to the club.

An observance of these general rules, with a little attention to a few minor points, which it is scarcely possible to allude to more particularly here, will render you a most agreeable member of the society to which you belong, and which it will be right to denounce everywhere else as the most execrable hole in London, in which you can get nothing fit either to eat or drink, but in which you, yourself, nevertheless breakfast, dine, and sup every day, when you are not otherwise engaged.

THEODORE HOOK.

AN INCIDENT.

I SAW her in the mazy dance,
A beauty young and bright;
And by her smile, her step, her glance,
I knew her heart was light.
Full many a queenly form was there,
And many a happy face;
But none I thought was half so fair,
Or owned so sweet a grace.
And while to music's merry clash
They mixed and moved along,
I saw her bright eyes frequent flash
For one amidst the throng.
She watched him gliding to and fro
Through all that smiling band,
And oh! what joy she seemed to know
When'er he took her hand!
On went the dance: once more it brought
That loved one circling near;
He stood beside her, and I thought
He whispered in her ear.
But ah! what dreadful words were they
That caused her sudden start;
That seemed to take her breath away,
And wound her to the heart?
With gathering tears her eyes grew dim,
And down her head she bowed,
And leaning faint and weak on him
She moved from out the crowd.
He sat beside her, white with woe,
I heard him pray and plead,
And ask in accents soft and low,
Forgiveness for the deed.
He did not plead and pray in vain,
For soon her grief was o'er,
But though I saw her smile again,
That night she danced no more.
What words were they that marred her bliss,
And bade such grief be born?
Well, none at all: the fact was this—
He trod upon her corn!

T. D. SULLIVAN.

By permission of the Author.

AN EVENING IN TUSCANY.

Look! the sun sets. Now the rarest
Hour of all the blessed day;
(Just the hour, love, you look fairest!)
Even the snails are out to play.
Cool the breeze mounts, like this Chianti
Which I drain down to the sun
—There! shut up that old green Dante—
Turn the page, where we begun,
At the last news of Ulysses—
A grand image, fit to close
Just such grand gold eves as this is,
• Full of splendours and repose!
So loop up those long bright tresses—
Only, one or two must fall

Down your warm neck, Evening kisses
 Through the soft curls spite of all.
 And look down now, o'er the city
 Sleeping soft among the hills—
 Our dear Florence! That great Pitti
 With its steady shadow fills
 Half the town up: its unwinking
 Cold-white windows, as they glare
 Down the long streets, set one thinking
 Of the old Dukes who lived there;
 For one knows them, those strange men, so—
 Subtle brains, and iron thaws!
 There, the gardens of Lorenzo—
 The long cypress avenues—
 Creep up slow the stately hill-side
 Where the merry loungers are.
 But far more I love this still side—
 The blue plain you see so far!
 Where the shore of bright white villas
 Leaves off faint: the purple breadths
 Of the olives and the willows:
 And the gold-rimm'd mountain-widths:
 All transfused in slumb'rous glory
 To one burning point—the sun!
 But up here—slow, cold, and hoary,
 Reach the olives, one by one:
 And the land looks fresh: the yellow
 Arbuté-berries, here and there,
 Growing slowly ripe and mellow
 Through a flush of rosy hair.
 For the Tramontana last week
 Was about: 'tis scarce three weeks
 Since the snow lay, one white, vast streak,
 Upon those old purple peaks.
 So to-day among the grasses
 One may pick up tens and twelves
 Of young olives, as one passes,
 Blown about, and by themselves
 Blackening sullen-ripe. The corn, too,
 Grows each day from green to golden.
 The large-eyed windflowers, forlorn too,
 Blow among it, unbeholden:
 Some white, some crimson, others
 Purple blackening to the heart.
 From the deep wheat-sea, which smothers
 Their bright globes up, how they start!
 And the small wild pinks from tender
 Feather-grasses peep at us:
 While above them burns, on slender
 Stems, the red gladiolus:
 Are the grapes yet green? this season
 They'll be round and sound and true,
 If no after-blight should seize on
 Those young bunches turning blue.
 O that night of purple weather!
 (Just before the moon had set)
 You remember how together
 We walked home?—the grass was wet—
 The long grass in the Poderé—
 With the balmy dew among it:
 And that nightingale—his airy

Song—how fairy-like he sung it!
 All the fig trees had grown heavy
 With the young figs white and woolly:
 And the fireflies bevy on bevy
 Of soft sparkles, pouring fully
 Their warm life through trance on trances
 Of thick citron-shades behind,
 Rcse, like swarms of loving fancies
 Through some rich and pensive mind.
 So we reach'd the Loggia. Leaning
 Faint, we sat there in the shade.
 Neither spoke. The night's deep weaning
 Fill'd the silence up unsaid.
 Hoarsely through the Cypress-alley
 A Civetta out of tune
 Tried his voice by fits. The valley
 Lay all dark below the moon.
 Until into song you burst out—
 That old song I made for you—
 When we found our rose—the first out
 Last sweet Spring-time in the dew.
 Well! . . . if things had gone less wildly—
 Had I settled down before
 There, in England—labour'd mildly—
 And been patient—and learn'd more
 Of how men should live in London—
 Been less happy—or more wise—
 Left no great works tried and undone—
 Never look'd in your soft eyes—
 I . . . but what's the use of thinking?
 Hark! our Nightingale—he sings—
 Now a rising note—now sinking
 Back in little broken rings
 Of warm song, that spread and eddy—
 Now he picks up heart—and draws
 His great music, slow and steady,
 To a silver-centred pause!

OWEN MEREDITH.

By permission of LADY LYTTON.

LENORA.

"No, lovely Lenora, once freed from the chain,
 Let her claim me who can, as Love's captive again;"
 I had sworn not to see her; 'twere ruin to meet,
 With so many admirers and men at her feet.
 I had won my gold spurs, was on leave for a year,
 And came covered with glory, quite *en cavalier*;
 When—a hand on my shoulder—Tom Burke, of
 the Blues,—
 "You will be at our dance, Fred; you dare not
 refuse."
 I had lounged through the figure, the last of the
 set,
 And just given my arm to my pretty brunette.
 Hark! that silvery laugh, and sweet voice—she
 was there,
 With a white Provence rose in her beautiful hair!

She knew me at once, by the blush and the start,
And the little gloved hand wildly pressed to her heart;

"Are you ill?" cried Lord D'Arcy; "the heat—
shall we go?"

"Yes, anywhere—quick—to the lime-walk below!"

She's alone; he had left her, I stood in his place,
And with spray from the fountain I sprinkled her face;

Then smoothed tenderly back the rich curl from her cheek;

Not a word had been spoken—for neither could speak.

It was one of those moments that fix a man's fate,
And when reason—resolve—come a little too late;
Lured, and lassoed, and lost, he must follow when led.

And Love drives him along with invisible thread.

Two friends from the country, two foes from the town;

A few parries and thrusts and Lord D'Arcy is down;

But not killed, for we met o'er the walnuts and wine,

Bowed grimly,—shook hands,—and Lenora was mine.

LINDON MEADOWS.

(REV. CHAS. B. GREATREX.)

By permission of the Author.

SCENE FROM "THE HONEYMOON."

SCENE.—A cottage.

*Enter the DUKE, leading in JULIANA.

DUKE. [*Placing chairs forward.*] You are welcome home.

JULI. Home? you are merry; this retired spot
Would be a palace for an owl! [*Going over to R.*

DUKE. 'Tis ours.

JULI. Ay, for the time we stay in it.

DUKE. By heaven,
This is the noble mansion that I spoke of!

JULI. This?—you are not in earnest, though you
bear it

With such a sober brow. Come, come, you jest.

DUKE. Indeed I jest not; were it ours in jest,
We should have none, wife.

JULI. Are you serious, sir?

DUKE. I swear, as I'm your husband, and no
Duke.

JULI. No Duke?

DUKE. But of my own creation, lady.

JULI. Am I betray'd? Nay, do not play the fool!
It is too keen a joke.

DUKE. You'll find it true.

JULI. You are no Duke, then?

DUKE. None.

JULI. [*Aside.*] Have I been cozen'd?
[*Aloud.*] And have you no estate, sir?
No palaces, nor houses?

DUKE. None but this—
A small snug dwelling, and in good repair.

JULI. Nor money, nor effects?

DUKE. None, that I know of.

JULI. And the attendants who have waited on
us—

DUKE. They were my friends; who, having done
my business,
Are gone about their own.

JULI. [*Aside.*] Why then 'tis clear.
That I was ever born! [*Aloud.*] What are you, sir?

DUKE. I am an honest man—that may content
you:

Young, nor ill-favoured. Should not that content
you,

I am your husband, and that must content you.

JULI. I will go home! [*Going.*

DUKE. [*Staying her.*] You are at home already.

JULI. I'll not endure it! But remember this—

Duke or no Duke, I'll be a Duchess, sir!

DUKE. A Duchess? you shall be a Queen—to all
Who, of their courtesy, will call you so.

JULI. And I will have attendance!

DUKE. ! So you shall,

When you have learnt to wait upon yourself.

JULI. To wait upon myself? Must I bear this?
I could tear out my eyes that bade you woo me,
And bite my tongue in two for saying, Yes!

[*Crosses.*
DUKE. And if you should, 'twould grow again.
I think, to be an honest yeoman's wife

(For such, my would-be Duchess, you will find me)
You were cut out by nature.

JULI. You will find, then,
That education, sir, has spoilt me for it.

Why, do you think I'll work?

DUKE. I think 'twill happen, wife.

JULI. What! rub and scrub

Your noble palace clean?

DUKE. Those taper fingers
Will do it daintily.

JULI. And dress your victuals
(If there be any)?—Oh, I could go mad! [*Crosses.*

DUKE. And mend my hose, and darn my night-
caps neatly;

Wait, like an echo, till you're spoken to—

JULI. Or, like a clock, talk only once an hour?

DUKE. Or like a dial; for that quietly

Performs its work, and never speaks at all.

JULI. To feed your poultr, and your hogs!—oh
monstrous!

And when I swar abroad, on great occasions,
Carry a squeaking tithe pig to the vicar;

Or jolt with higglers' wives the market trot,
To sell your eggs and butter!

DUKE. Excellent!

How well you sum the duties of a wife!

Why, what a blessing I shall have in you!

JUL. A blessing?

DUKE. When they talk of you and me,
Darby and Joan shall be no more remember'd;—
We shall be happy!

JUL. Shall we?

DUKE. Wond'rous happy.
Oh! you will make an admirable wife!

JUL. I'll make a devil.

*DUKE. What?

JUL. A very devil.

DUKE. Oh, no! we'll have no devils.

JUL. I'll not bear it.

I'll to my father's!—

DUKE. Gently,—you forget

You are a perfect stranger to the road.

JUL. My wrongs will find a way, or make one.

DUKE. Softly!—

You stir not hence, except to take the air,
And then I'll breathe it with you.

JUL. What! confine me?

DUKE. 'Twould be unsafe to trust you yet abroad.

JUL. Am I a truant school-boy?

DUKE. Nay, not so;

But you must keep your bounds.

JUL. And if I break them

Perhaps you'll beat me.

DUKE. No; I'll talk to you!

The man that lays his hand upon a woman,

Save in the way of kindness, is a wretch,

Whom 'twere gross flattery to name a coward.

JUL. Well, if I may not travel to my father,

I may write to him, surely!—and I will,

If I can meet within your spacious dukedom

Three such unhop'd-for miracles at once

As pens, and ink, and paper.

DUKE. You will find them

In the next room. A word before you go.

You are my wife, by ev'ry tie that's sacred;

The partner of my fortune and my bed—

JUL. [*Sneeringly.*] Your fortune!

DUKE. Peace! no fooling, idle woman.

Beneath th' attesting eye of heav'n I've sworn

To honour, cherish, and protect you.

No human power can part us. What remains, then?

To fret, and worry, and torment each other,

And give a keener edge to our hard fate

By sharp upbraidings and perpetual jars?

Or, like a loving and a patient pair

(Waked from a dream of grandeur to depend

Upon their daily labour for support),

To soothe the taste of fortune's lowliness

With sweet consent and mutual fond endearment?

Now to your chamber—write whate'er you please,

But pause before you stain the spotless paper

With words that may inflame, but cannot heal!

JUL. Why, what a patient worm you take me
for!

DUKE. I took you for a wife; and, ere I've done,
I'll know you for a good one.

JUL. You shall know me

For a right woman, full of her own sex;
Who, when she suffers wrong, will speak her
wrongs:

Who feels her own prerogative, and scorns

By the proud reason of superior man

To be taught patience, when her swelling heart

Cries out revenge! [*Exit.*]

DUKE. Why, let the flood rage on!

There is no tide in woman's wildest passion

But hath an ebb. I've broke the ice, however.—

Write to her father! She may write a folio—

But if she send it!—"Twill divert her spleen.

The flow of ink may save her blood-letting.

Perchance she may have fits! They're seldom
mortal,

Save when the doctor's sent for.—

Tho' I have heard some husbands say, and wisely,

A woman's honour is her safest guard,

Yet there's some virtue in a lock and key.

[*Locks the door.*]

So, thus begins our honeymoon.—'Tis well!

For the first fortnight, ruder than March winds,

She'll blow a hurricane. The next, perhaps,

Like April, she may wear a changeful face

Of storm and sunshine: and, when that is past,

She will break glorious as unclouded May;

And where the thorns grew bare, the spreading
blossoms

Meet with no lagging frost to kill their sweetness.

Whilst others, for a month's delirious joy,

Buy a dull age of penance; we, more wisely,

Taste first the wholesome bitter of the cup,

That after to the very lees shall relish;

And to the close of this frail life prolong

The pure delights of a well-govern'd marriage. [*Exit.*]

JOHN TOBIN.

A WONDERFUL WAGER.

ONCE on a time, in a small town bucolic,
An Election took place with much humour and
frolic;

And up to the hustings there stepped forth six
candidates,

For four seats contesting with fiercely-banded
hates.

With skill diplomatic, they dodged and they
struggled;

Left nothing undone by which votes might be
smuggled;

They cringed, and they bullied, they argued, and
shouted,

They canvassed with spirit, held meetings, and
spouted;

And each was in truth so prodigiously active,

To make himself more than his rivals attractive,

That all the good burghesses got much affected,

And their own proper businesses sorely neglected.

Four of these worthies were commonplace mortals,
Such as the world every day through its portals
Admits without bluster; but the other two—
Oh! they must be classed with the wonderful few.
On the red-letter day of each hero's nativity
The stars set to work with the greatest activity
To marshal themselves so conveniently,
To act so uncommonly leniently,
As to insure that these, their prime favourites,
For aye should have lucky days and peaceful nights.
So they ne'er were alarmed by the morrow's hopes,
For they knew full well from their horoscopes
(How different the lot of too many, alas!)
That all their fond projects would soon come to pass.
So, of course, it was certain they would be elected,
And all who had not lost their reason selected
Them, ne'er thinking twice, as the first and the
second,
While the other four out of the running were
reckoned.

But this was what puzzled the brain of each soul:
Of the champions, *Which* would be head of the Poll?
For each was a giant, who felt his proud mission
It was to attain to that signal position;
And each of them strained every nerve, every
muscle,

And braced himself up for the ensuing tussle.
And so on the morn of this heated battle,
Throughout the whole neighbourhood, all the tattle
Was, whether the Boniface Nipper would caper,
Or would he be beaten by Fustian, the Draper?

A jovial set filled the parlour-bar
Of Nipper's Hotel; each chewed a cigar,
And sipped a wee drop, while all were chatting,
Of course of the race, and each one was patting,
As may be supposed, and as only was right,
The one he had marked as his favourite,
When, just at the height of the arguing and talk-
ing,

Into the midst of the babblers came stalking,
Just as a new actor pops on the scene,
A gentleman, portly, of pompous mien,
Known as the Old Boy, and well known as "well
off,"

But who, though he had more coin than enough,
Still trifled and toyed with a little farm,
With the object of keeping himself from worse
harm.

Oh! a rare chap was he, and most popular
With all his acquaintances near and afar.
"Well, cronies," quoth he, "I must own I'm
delighted,

That such a choice bevy of spirits I've sighted;
Come now, do oblige me, and speedily finish
These heeltaps, and quickly your glasses replenish.
Come, now, what's the betting on our little race,—
Say who will to-night proudly soar in first place?"
Thus pleasantly challenged, the cronies disclosed
That in two divisions they might be disposed;
One favouring Nipper, while the other one swore
That Fustian's votes would be more by a score.

Quoth Old Boy, "What's this nonsense? How very
absurd.

Pooh! pooh! let's not squander another word.
What! Fustian beat Nipper? I never yet heard
A notion so very preposterous,
A forecast so highly ridiculous.
Now, listen to me: I will wager with any one
Ay, let him be ever such a 'cute and a canny
one,

A supper, with fizz, for all now in the room
That 'tis my friend Nipper's unspeakable doom
To attain to the point of his highest ambition;
I am firmly convinced, 'tis his fated mission
With ease to reach foremost the envied goal,
And to-night to roll in *at the Head of the Poll!*"

This speech was the cause of intense merriment,
And instantly all eyes, by mutual consent,
Were turned on one Acres, a ponderous Gun, he,
A landed proprietor, who had heaps of money;
For Fustian, as every one knew, was his favourite,
So 'twas thought he would jump at the wager, and
cover it.

Nor did the gay company wrongly conjecture,
For he said, "Sir, I'll take you; I allow you to
select your

Own man, but on Fustian my opinion I durst
Venture, and will pay, *if he is not first*;
But should he the victor come out in the fight,
Then you with our landlord must make it all right.
There are the conditions, and we are agreed,
So let us at once go and order the feed."

It was done, and the company quickly dispersed,
Resolved that their appetites should be well
nursed,

And then each one practised the very best plan he
Could invent or had heard of, to help on the man
he

Would fain be the winner to wriggle in first,
And every one dodged quite as far as he durst.

The Poll duly closed; the supper was set,
And at the fixed moment the company met
To feast, till they learnt who had lost the bet,
For the votes must be counted before they could
tell;

Meanwhile they resolved to enjoy themselves well.
The cloth was removed, cigars were passed round,
The wine was discussed, and when the Chair found
That that came to pass, he ordered a jorum
Of steaming rum punch to be set out before 'em.
Of this but a few rounds had been ladled out,
When outside arose a vociferous shout
Of "Nipper!" then "Fustian!" from which they
all knew

That the Poll was declared, so the window flew
Open. The Chairman bawled into the street,
"Who's first?" and was answered, "'Tis a dead
heat!"

For Nipper and Fustian have polled equal
numbers."

Quoth Old Boy and Acres, "Well, come, this is
rum, sirs."

"But, still," said Old Boy, "Of our hands I've the upper,
My man heads the Poll; Acres pays for the supper."

Quoth Acres, "What nonsense you talk, on my soul!

Why, how can your candidate head the Poll
When they're both at the top! 'Tis you who have lost,

And so of this supper you must pay the cost."

"Your pardon I crave, sir," said Old Boy, with choler,

As he gulped down some punch by way of consolation;

"I'll see you—some distance before I will do so."

"But, sir," answered Acres, "how can you but choose so?"

"How dare you!" shrieked Old Boy, whose brow here grew so

Alarmingly gloomy, that kind friends, who feared A violent scene, with effect interfered,

The disputants straight off the premises led,
Took each to his house, and safe tucked him in bed.

Unlimited argument ruled the next day
With a view to decide the moot point, Who must pay.

Doctors, lawyers, and parsons, and publicans
All studied the point, and all had their plans
How it should be concluded, and some got quite testy on

This very involved and most intricate question.
One said Acres had lost; "Not so," said another;
While others still, hoping to finish the bother,
Pointed out that the right thing was to abide by
The rules which the jockeys at Epsom Downs ride by,—

Whenever it happens a dead-heat takes place,
Neither one nor the other can pull off the race,
And the cost of the supper should be divided;
But this stupid notion both good men derided,
And each one protested, with warmth, that, of course, he

Couldn't really be fettered by arguments horsey.
So each to his argument stuck with a will,
And strove to make t'other just pay up the bill;
But, of course, neither wished to seek an excuse,
Which would save him the strings of his purse to unloose,

And to scribble a cheque each was really eager,
Were it proved he had lost, no matter the figure.
What could he do less? His name would not stand it,

If he didn't, had any one grounds to demand it!
So they argued away—while nobody paid
Poor Nipper, who was not a cent richer made;
And he thought it was useless to take steps at law,
As he happened to know of this awkward flaw,
That the statutes at large are directly set,
And also the judges (in banco when met),
Against whatsoever bears scent of a bet;

And were My Lord asked to pass judgment on this,

Poor Nipper knew well 'twould not add to his bliss.
He no order could fix upon anybody

For one joint of meat, or for one glass of toddy;

The bargain, alas and alack the day,

Was this, that who lost was the one who must pay.

Yet here 'twould appear that no one had lost,

So therefore the supper would be at his cost!

But he vowed he would certainly never admit

He had napped even slightly, or been at all bit,

Though he felt for the moment decidedly hit.

As for the wagers, both still with pride said,

They'd willingly pay—when the point was decided;

And often in public,—indoors, in the street,—

With epithets strong one another would greet;

And yet at each other aside they'd wink sly,

Which carried the meaning, "It's all in my eye!"

And when unobserved in a private chit-chat,

They'd grin, and cry, "Haven't we done for that Flat!"

EDWARD JOHNS.

By permission of the Author.

THAT MORNING OF THE WEDDING.

THE day had dawned—I opened wide

My bedroom-window, listening;

The birds and bees were all awake,

The flowers with dew were glistening;—

And through the mists the welcome sun

Its glorious light was shedding,

As if it rose to wish me joy,

That morning of the wedding!

Yet, while I pondered there, a sigh

Came mingling with my gladness,

And in the music of the birds

I heard a note of sadness;

For as I thought about the life

I should begin to-morrow,

I knew—in spite of all its bliss—

'Twas sure to bring some sorrow!

I was so absent-minded when

I put my wedding suit on;

I crushed my shirt, and walked about

With one shoe and one boot on!

And at the breakfast-table, too,

I felt in such a flutter,

That, in my dreams, I spread the toast

On both sides with the butter!

I reached the church, and joined my bride—

The wonder is I found her;

She looked an angel, dressed in white,

With bridesmaids all around her!

So still she stood, with downcast head

Half-hidden in long veiling;

Whilst on the ground, in silvery folds,
Her splendid train was trailing!

The place appeared to swim around—

I felt like one distracted;
Till uncle coughed, to hide a smile,
So awkwardly I acted:—

To shew me what I might expect,
I should have had a teacher;
For when I saw the verger first,
I thought *he* was the preacher!

The clergyman such questions asked,
They drove me nearly crazy;
We had to wait, to find the ring—
My mind had grown so hazy!
And when he said—"You'll take this wife?"
I couldn't speak correctly;
Instead of answering him, "I will!"
I stammered, "Yes!" directly.

And when the register was signed,
We tried to reach our carriage;
The crowd outside behaved as if
They'd never seen a marriage.
They nearly blinded us with rice—
Determined to be festive;
And cheered around the horses till
The animals grew restive.

Safe home we came; the feast began,
The speeches were so funny,
Uncle proposed—"The couple's health,
Long life, and loads of money!"
Then mirth grew loud and louder; till
It sounded like a Babel;
For none were thoughtful but the bride
And bridegroom, at the table!

But when at last we bade—"Good-bye!"
Uncle himself was sighing;—
My father's eyes looked very red,
And mother burst out crying!
Whilst aunt I know was nervous, by
Her bonnet's trembling feather;
And when she said—"God bless you both!"
She broke down altogether!

And as we through the village drove,
The church bells still were chiming;—
Those bells—that speak of death and grief,
Of life and hope were rhyming!
Whilst, over all, the glorious sun
Its golden light was shedding,
As if the world had wished us joy,
That morning of the wedding!

J. REDDIE MALLETT.

A Chapter from "A Life's History, told in Homely Verse."
By permission of the Author. Published by Messrs.
RICHARD BENTLEY & SON,

SHON HEIMS' PAIPE.

Yes, dot vos a mos' rremarkabel paipe of poor old Shon Heims, un' I dessey it was vurth som' monney, bot shtill, I would not have been de possessor of it, nod for fordy pounds—and ash to shmokin' it, I would rather have shmoke a chocolad stick or a bischen brown paper. Vai, you say? Vell, it vos nod for no shentimental reasons. Shon Heims is dead, I know, and left his paipe behind him—bod other peoples is dead too, and left dere paipes on de shelf just de same, and de paipes have been shmoke by odder peoples and no harm is come. But dis paipe of Shon's, it was different. It vos a *murderer*—it killed old Shon sure as Peder killed de flea. Oh, no, it vasn't from no over-shmokin'—old Shon Heims hadn't no time to shmoke moch, he had soch a lot of drinkin' to get throo vid. He would shtop so long between each poff of his paipe to drink lager, or branntwein, or wodnod, dat de paipe would go ride out—and I tink he most have spend more monney on matches dan tobacco. No, it vasn't from no overschmoking dat paipe killed him. It frightened him to death, dot was all. It frightened him to death. I vos there and I know it.

You know how dot paipe vos made? No? Vell, it was a meerscham paipe mit' de bowl carved into a leetle grinnin' devil; just a leetle grinnin' thing laike vod you see in som of dem old paintings. It had two liddel horns, and a liddel tail, all complete. Und dere vas two liddel red bits of glass shtuck in for eyes.

Vell, you say, dere vas noding rremarkabel in dot! So but you wait. Dis vos a meerscham paipe, as I tole you, and Shon vanted to get it colloured—people mit meerscham paipes is all de same in dot respect. But Shon shmoke so liddel dat he make no impression on his paipe at all, and de liddel devil keep his face as pale as ashes all de time. One day Shon comes to me, and he says:—"Rudolf," he says, "I can't collour mein paipe, do vat I vill."

"Vell," I says, "wot madder? It shmoke shost as vell on-colloured."

"It isn't dat," says Shon. "It's a shtroggle between this liddel devil and meinself. Everytime I shmoke he grin at me, and goggle with dem red augen, and seem to laugh. He kflow I can't collour him, und—und—bod I vill, all de same. Rudolf," says Shon, "tell me, dos boiling a paipe in oil collour him?"

"It certainly collour him, I says, "but it don' do the paipe no good."

"I don' care a bit about t'ie paipe," says Shon, "but I mean to put some collour in that liddel devil's cheeks, and so I boil him to-morrow."

Vell, Shon he leafs de paipe at de tobacconist's to be boiled, and den he goes and gets very, very drunk—vorse don I've ever known him, und dot is drunk, I can tell you. And lader on, ven he get de paipe back, he gets dronker shtill, so pleased is

he mit de results. For dere vas de poor liddel devil, de same like a red Indian, and his goggle augen no longer brait, but lurid and sollen like de son in a fog. I had to help Shon home dot day ven he got de paibe back, and I vos in his parlour ven he lit oop for his first shmoke.

"Ah, you liddel devil!" he cried; "I've put a complexion on you now. You didn' tink about bein' boiled in oil, did you, ven you used to grin at me? Eh—vot? Himmel! Rudolf! Take it away—take it away—it is shpeakin to me!"

Und before you could look, Shon vas dashing about de room like vildfire, mit de paibe in his mouth, his eyes out of his head, de perspiration on his face—bod he could not let go de paibe from his lips, and I was too frightened to toch it.

"Rudolf," screamed Shon, "take him away! He's burning me—he says—Himmel!—can you not hear him? He says he vill boil me—in oil—Rudolf—my veins are on fire—on fire—take him away! away!"

Und mit dat por Shon fell screamin' on de floor, and dere was a horrible—horrible smell—like vot I trost I never schmill again—and den mit my shoutin and por Shon's yells, de peoble came roshing in and bring a doctor; but it vos too late. Shon vos dead—de fire from his paibe had done it. Poor Shon being so saturated with alcohol, de doctor said, and he vos dead, dead mit spontaneous combustion. And dere vos dat grinning devil of a paibe in his lips, vich dey had to remove by force, and vich had its own way after all, as vell as its revenge on Shon. For, like all paibes boiled in oil, ven dey are not shmoked, it lost its collour, and dis von very soon became as vaite as ever.

Und dere vos no man dare toch it bod de doctor, and he vouldn't keep it long, but presented it, in a glass case, to the hospital, vere it grins to dis day at everybody vot goes by. Poor, poor, Shon Heims!

W. SAPTE, Jun.

By permission of the Author.

BINGEN ON THE RHINE.

A SOLDIER of the Legion lay dying in Algiers—There was lack of woman's nursing, there was dearth of woman's tears;

But a comrade stood beside him while his life-blood ebbed away,
And bent, with pitying glances, to hear what he might say.

The dying soldier faltered, as he took that comrade's hand,

And he said: "I never more shall see my own, my native land;

Take a message and a token to some distant friends of mine,

For I was born at Bingen—at Bingen on the Rhine!

"Tell my brothers and companions, when they meet and crowd around

To hear my mournful story, in the pleasant vineyard ground,

That we fought the battle bravely—and, when the day was done,

Full many a corpse lay ghastly pale, beneath the setting sun.

And 'midst the dead and dying were some grown old in wars,—

The death-wound on their gallant breasts, the last of many scars!

But some were young,—and suddenly beheld life's morn decline,—

And one there came from Bingen—fair Bingen on the Rhine!

"Tell my mother that her other sons shall comfort her old age,

And I was aye a truant bird, that thought his home a cage:

For my father was a soldier, and, even as a child, My heart leaped forth to hear him tell of struggles fierce and wild;

And when he died, and left us to divide his scanty board,

I let him take what'er they would—but kept my father's sword;

And with boyish love I hung it where the bright light used to shine,

On the cottage-wall at Bingen—calm Bingen on the Rhine!

"Tell my sister not to weep for me, and sob with drooping head,

When the troops are marching home again, with glad and gallant tread;

But to look upon them proudly, with a calm and steadfast eye,

For her father was a soldier too,—and not afraid to die.

And, if a comrade seek her love, I ask her, in my name,

To listen to him kindly, without regret or shame;

And to hang the old sword in its place (my father's sword and mine),

For the honour of old Bingen—dear Bingen on the Rhine!

"There's another—not a sister,—in the happy days gone by,

You'd have known her by the merriment that sparkled in her eye;

Too innocent for coquetry; too fond for idle scorn-ing;—

Oh, friend! I fear the lightest heart makes sometimes heaviest mourning!

Tell her, the last night of my life—(for, ere this moon be risen,

My body will be out of pain—my soul be out of prison),

I dreamed I stood with *her*, and saw the yellow
sunlight shine
On the vine-clad hills of Bingen—fair Bingen on
the Rhine!

"I saw the blue Rhine sweep along—I heard, or
seemed to hear,
The German songs we used to sing, in chorus
sweet and clear!
And down the pleasant river, and up the slanting
hill,
That echoing chorus sounded, through the evening
calm and still;
And her glad blue eyes were on me, as we passed
with friendly talk
Down many a path belov'd of yore, and well-
remembered walk;
And her little hand lay lightly, confidingly in
mine . . .
But we'll meet no more at Bingen,—loved Bingen
on the Rhine!"

His voice grew faint and hoarser,—his grasp was
childish weak,—
His eyes put on a dying look,—he sighed and
ceased to speak:
His comrade bent to lift him . . . but the spark
of life had fled!
The soldier of the Legion, in a foreign land was
dead!
And the soft moon rose up slowly, and calmly she
looked down
On the red sand of the battle-field, with bloody
corpses strewn;
Yea, calmly on that dreadful scene her pale light
seemed to shine,
As it shone on distant Bingen—fair Bingen on
the Rhine!

HON. MRS. NORTON.

A REMARKABLE FARE.

HERE, what do you call this? A *shillin'* for drivin'
you all round the town,
Leastways, from the Bank to the Circus? I tell
you my fare's half-a-crown.
My ticket? I ain't got no ticket. Well, summons
you? Summons, be blowed!
A nice sort of gentleman *you* are! You'd take a
poor man off the road
And get him to drive you for nothink—that's just
what you'd like, I dessay;
But I've got to work for my livin', and that sort o'
thing doesn't pay.
It *isn't* a bob? Then what is it? A *suvin'*? I
can't give you change.
What! *keep* it? You don't mean that, *guv'nor*?
You do! Well that seems rather strange.

Oh! you want somethink more for the money! All
right, sir, just give it a name.
What! you don't want to drive any further? Then
what, may I ask, is your game?
Eh? Tell you a story? Lord bless you! I ain't got
no story to tell.
Oh! that 'ere's been said before, has it? Well, *you*
ought to know—you're a swell.
I ain't very much of a scholar: I wasn't Board-
school'd, so to speak,
And my readin', it don't go beyond just a dip into
Lloyd's once a week,
Where you read about murders and robberies—you
talk about stories, you do?
Why, the things as they put into books ain't a patch
on the things that are true.
That's just what you want—a true story, about a
remarkable fare?
Have I ever had one o' that sort, sir? Lord, yes,
and a many to spare.
I've often been bilked o' my money—some houses
has got a back door,
And while you're kep' waitin' in front—Oh! you've
heard 'o them dodges before?
Well, I really can't think o' no story, exceptin' what
ev'ryone knows—
Unless—well, I might tell you *that*, sir. And why
not? I will—so here goes.

It was beastly fine weather, one summer: the streets
was disgustin'ly dry,
As there wasn't no rain all the season, nor hardly a
cloud in the sky.
It was all very pleasant for walkin', or ridin' a-top
of a bus;
But that state o' things, as you know, sir, is precious
bad bizness for us.
For when you find all your day's earnin's won't pay
for the keep o' the hoss
It ain't very easy to bring home your thirteen-and-
six for the boss.
Then my mother took ill with the fever, and that
of course made matters worse,
As I had to perwidge her with physic, as well as a
doctor and nurse.
But the longest o' lanes has a turnin', as cabmen
have often to say,
And a turn in the lane o' my troubles came all of a
sudden one day.
I had been on the stand all the mornin', and crawlin'
the whole afternoon—
(The date, as I'd cause to remember, was Thursday,
the fourteenth o' June),
And 'twas close by the Edgware Road Station, just
joinin' the Lisson Grove Bank,
That I stopp'd to have tea in a shelter, while leavin'
my cab on the rank.
And as soon as I'd finished my victuals I got up
and went to the door,
When I saw a young woman just leavin' the bank
as I spoke of afore.

She came and asked two or three cabbies some question that I couldn't hear,
And they all seemed to give the same answer—a
"No," with a bit of a sneer.

"What's up, Bill?" says I to one party. Says he,
with a sniff and a frown,

"Here's a gal wants to drive for a *shillin'* to Prince
o' Wales Road, Kentish Town."

I couldn't help bustin' out laughin': says I, "That's
a nice little game!

Why didn't she bring out the kerridge? Has *both*
o' the hosses gone lame?"

So I stood there, intendin' to chaff her; but when
I caught sight of her face,

Which was pale, but so pretty and pleadin', it
altered the state o' the case,

And, because she was dressed very shabby, and
seemed, like myself, poor enough,
I thought, if I had to refuse her, I'd do it without
bein' rough.

Well, she asked me the same as the others, and I,
not to give her offence,

Says, "I'm sorry, miss, not to oblige you, but really
the fare's eighteencepence."

So she gave up the game; but with women that's
often the best way to win;

And as soon as that gal turned to leave me, I cried,
"Here, come back and jump in."

At the door of the house where I dropped her she
paid me the shilling all right:

Though it stuck in my throat to say "Thank you,"
I said it, and wished her "Good night";

And I drove straight away without stoppin', for
somehow, in breakin' our rule

Not to take a less fare than the "legal" I felt I'd
been rather a fool.

Dut, big fare or small, not another did I get the
rest o' that day;

And a good job it was that I didn't, as p'raps you
will presently say.

For, just before takin' the cab home I gave a look
in at the door,

As parties will sometimes leave somethink behind
on the seats or the floor,

And whatever you find you must take it direkly
to New Scotland Yard,

Where they'll give you a part of its value by way
of a sort of reward.

Well, I searched for a bit without findin' as much
as a stick or a rag,

When I suddenly spied in the corner a little round
wash-leather bag

Full o' somethink that seemed to be money; and
was, too, for, lo and behold,

When I undid the strings to look in it, I saw it
was chock full o' gold!

Gold, in shinin' half-suv'rins and suv'rins; I
emptied the bag and I found,

When I set to and counted the money, it totted
up just fifty pound!

Lord! the sight o' that gold knocked me silly! I
thought I was dreamin' in bed,
For indeed, sir, I don't mind confessin', at first I
went clean off my head.

Fifty pound! phew! a regular fortun'! and ~~me~~
just as poor as a rat.

To be sure it was somebody else's, but I never
thought about that.

"It's all mine," I says, "for I've found it, and I
mean to stick to the chink.

As for givin' it up to the peelers—not likely, eh?
What do *you* think?"

So I picked up the shiners in handfuls, and tum-
bled 'em into the bag;

Got on to the box in a twinklin' and drove straight
away with the swag.

And while goin' along I considered what use I
should make o' this pelf.

"Why," thinks I, "I could set up in bizness, and
be a cab-owner myself;

Fancy, me a hemploye o' labour!" I laughed at
the notion, but then—

Well, I thought I should make a good master, and
deal fair and square with the men;

For I wouldn't sweat out their last copper, but
take my fair portion and give

The poor fellows a chance of existence—in short, I
would live and let live.

But I pulled myself up the next minute: "Here,
what am I after?" I said,

"I've gone and forgot my old mother, who's lyin'
at home, ill in bed."

For what were the words o' the doctor? "She'd
very soon pick up," says he,

"If she got down to Margate or Ramsgate, a dose
o' fresh air by the sea."

Go to Margate or Ramsgate? What rubbish!
Why, who was to pay the expense

Of the journey and lodgin's and cet'ra? I won-
dered he hadn't more sense.

But he wasn't to blame. How could *he* know I'd
pawned every stick we could spare

Just to keep us on this side o' starvin', so had
nothink left for sea air?

But now I'd come into this fortun', the first thing
I'd do with my wealth

Was to give the old woman a fortnight at Rams-
gate, to get back her health.

So I whipped up the horse, in a hurry to put up my
cab in the mews,

For I longed to get home to my mother and tell
her the glorious news.

"But whoa!" says I, all of a sudden; "them
notions is all very fine,

But one thing I've just clean forgotten, this money
I've found isn't mine.

And if it ain't mine, then, whose is it? That gal
in the old shabby gown,

As I drove nigh three miles for a *shillin'* to Prince
o' Wales Road, Kentish Town?"

Well, at first it seemed not very likely, but, as I had seen her come out Of the bank where they keep people's savin's, I felt just a sort of a doubt. Supposin' she'd put by this money, the earnin's, it might be, of years— I fancied I saw her before me, lamentin', with sorrow and tears, At the loss of her poor little savin's, which just then she wanted 'em bad ; For perhaps she was goin' to be married, and this 'ere was all that she had In the world, for herself and her husband, to set up their housekeepin' on, And now, p'raps, the chap wouldn't have her because all her money was gone. Well, of course, this was all 'magination, but somehow I felt it was true, Or, if not, it wasn't far from it ; so what was I going to do ? It didn't take long to consider ; I thought of that gal and her grief, And says I to myself, " I can't rob her—I ain't such a dirty, mean thief. And I'll chuck up that cab-ownin' bizness that once I was thinkin' o' buyin'— As for stealin' the money for mother ?—no, not to prevent her from dyin'." So I whipped up the horse and drove faster, and put up my cab in the mews, And then I went home to my mother and told her I hadn't no news ; For I thought it would only be cruel to tell her as how I had got In my pocket a bagful o' money, and had to give up the whole lot.

Well, I got out the cab in the mornin', and drove it straight up to the door Of the house where I took that young woman and left her the evenin' before ; But I'd only to ask for " the lady—I didn't know what was her name— As was brought home last night by a cabman," when down in a minute she came. Yes, she came with a rush and a flutter, and gave me a grip o' the arm, With a sort like a mixture of wonder and joy and alarm ; And she says, " Oh ! thank God, you're the cabman who acted so kindly last night— Have you found— ? " Here she stopped, so I answered, " The money ? I've got it all right." Then I pulled the bag out of my pocket and says, " This is yours, I expect. If you please, I'll stop here while you count it—I'd just like to hear it's correct." Lord ! to see how her pretty face brightened with pleasure to hear me say this ! Why, she seemed as though wantin' to hug me and give me a good smackin' kiss.

But she didn't—worse luck !—only asked me to step, for a minute, upstairs. So I went with her up to her father, and found out the state of affairs. He was ill ; in fact, pretty near dyin', and this fifty pound was his own, Which he'd saved in the bank for his daughter, who'd be, at his death, left alone, As he hadn't no other relations, and she was to get all he had. There wasn't no question o' marriage, which made me feel—not very bad. Then the old man he thanked me, and so on, and when they both begged me to take, Say a couple o' pounds for my trouble, I took 'em for old mother's sake. So she got, after all, down at Ramsgate, her dose o' fresh air by the sea, And came home again in a fortnight as jolly and well' as could be. And the luck took a turn from that moment, for nice broken weather set in, So all through the rest o' the summer we cabmen earned plenty o' tin. There ! that's about all o' my story ; it ain't up to much, I'm afraid ; But at least, sir, I hope you'll consider it's worth that 'ere sovrin you've paid. It's a job as I always have thought the remarkablest fare in my life. What became o' that pretty young woman ?—Eh ! Well, sir—you see—she's my wife.

E. J. GOODMAN.

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TITMOUSE AND HIS LANDLADY.

GRIPE, the collector, called one morning for the poor-rates due from Mrs. Squallop (Titmouse's landlady), and cleaned her out of almost every penny of ready money which she had by her. This threw the good woman upon her resources, to replenish her empty pocket, and down she came upon Titmouse—or rather, up she went to him ; for his heart sank within him that night on his return from the shop, having only just taken off his hat and lit his candle, as he heard the fat old tarmagant's well-known heavy step ascending the stairs and approaching nearer and nearer his door. The loud, imperative single knock vibrated through his heart, and he was ready to drop.

" Oh, Mrs. Squallop ! How d'ye do, Mrs. Squallop ? " commenced Titmouse faintly, when he had opened the door ; " won't you take a chair ? " offering to the panting dame almost the only chair he had.

" No, I ain't come to stay, Mr. Titmouse, because

d'ye see, in course you've got a pound at least ready for me, as you promised long ago—and never more welcome; there's only Gripe been here to-day, and had his hodious rates—drat the poor, say I! them as can't work should starve!—rates is a robbery!—but howsomdever he's cleaned me out to-day; so, in course, I come up to *you*. Got it?"

"I—I—I 'pon my life, Mrs. Squallop, I'm uncommon sorry——"

"Oh, bother your sorrow, Mr. Titmouse!—out with the needful, for I can't stop palavering here."

"I—I can't, so help me——!" gasped Titmouse, with the calmness of desperation.

"You can't! And marry, sir, why not, may I make bold to ask?" inquired Mrs. Squallop, after a moment's pause, striving to choke down her rage.

"Praps you can get blood out of a stone, Mrs. Squallop? it's what I can't," replied Titmouse, striving to screw up his courage to the sticking place, to encounter one who was plainly bent upon mischief. "I've got two shillings—there they are," throwing them on the table: "and cuss me if I've another rap in the world; there, ma'am!"

"You're a liar then, that's flat!" exclaimed Mrs. Squallop, slapping her hand upon the table with a violence that made the candle quiver on it, and almost fall down. "You have the *himpudence*," said she, commencing the address she had been preparing in her own mind ever since Mr. Gripe had quitted her house, "to stand there and tell me you've got nothing in the world but them *two shillings*! Heugh! Out on you, you oudacious fellow!—you jack-a-dandy! You tell me you haven't got more than them two shillings, and yet turns out every Sunday morning of your life like a lord, with your pins, and your rings, and your chains, and your fine coat, and your gloves, and your spurs, and your dandy cane—eugh! you whipper-snapper! You're a cheat, you're a swindler, jack-a-dandy! You're the contempt of the whole court, you are, you jack-a-dandy! You've got all my rent on your back, and have had every Sunday for three months, you cheat!—you low fellow!—you ungrateful chap! You're a robbing the widow and fatherless! Look at me and my six fatherless children down there, you good-for-nothing, nasty, proud puppy!—eugh! it makes me sick to see you. You dress yourself out like my Lord Mayor! You've bought a gold chain with my rent, you rascally cheat! You dress yourself out! Ha ha! you're a nasty, mean-looking, humpty-dumpty, carrotty-headed——"

"You'd better not say that again, Mrs. Squallop," quoth Titmouse, with a fierce glance.

"Not say it again!—ha, ha! Hoighty-doighty, carrotty-headed jack-a-dandy! Why you hop-o'-my-thumb! d'ye think I won't say whatever I choose, and in my own house? You're a Titmouse by name and by nature; there ain't no cockroach crawling downstairs that ain't more respectable-like and better behaved than you. You're a himpudent

cheat, and dandy, and knave, and a liar, and a red-haired rascal—and that in your teeth! Ough! Your name stinks in the court. You're a-taking of everybody in as will trust you to a penny's amount. There's poor old Cox, the tailor, with a sick wife and children, whom you've cheated this many months, all of his not having spirit to summons you! But I'll set him upon you; you see if I don't—and I'll have my own too, or I wouldn't give that for the laws!" shouted Mrs. Squallop, at the same time snapping her fingers in his face, and then pausing for breath after her eloquent invective.

"Now, what is the use?" said Titmouse gently, being completely cowed—"now, what good can it do to go on in this way, Mrs. Squallop?"

"Missus me! no Missus, Mr. Titmouse, but pay me my rent, you jack-a-dandy! You've got my rent on your back, and on your little finger; and I'll have it off you before I've done with you, I warrant you! I'm your landlady, and I'll sell you up; I'll have old Thumbscrew here the first thing in the morning, and distract everything, and you too, you jackdaw, if anyone would buy you, which they won't. I'll have my rent at last; I've been too easy with you, you ungrateful chap; for mark, even Gripe this morning says, 'Haven't you a gentleman lodger up above? get him to pay your own,' says he, and so I will. I'm sick of all tiffs, and I'll have my rights! Here's my son Jem, a far better-looking chap than you, though he *hasn't* got hair like a sandy mop all under his chin, and he's obligated to work from one week's end to another, in a paper cap and a fustian jacket; and you—you painted jackanapes! But now I have got you, and I'll turn you inside out, though I know there's nothing in you! But I'll try to get at your fine coats, and spurs, and trousers, your chains and pins, and make something of them before I've done with you, you jack-a-dandy!"—and the virago shook her fist at him, looking as though she had not yet uttered even half what was in her heart towards him.

Titmouse trembled violently, his lips quivered, and the long pent-up tears forced their way at length over his eyelids, and fell fast down his cheeks.

"Ah, you may well cry!—you may! But it's too late!—it's my turn to cry now! Don't you think that I feel for my own flesh and blood, that is my six children? And isn't what's mine theirs? And aren't you keeping the fatherless out of their own? It's too bad of you!—it is!—and you know it is!" continued Mrs. Squallop vehemently.

"They've got a mother—a kind—good—mother—to take—care of them!" Titmouse sobbed; "but there's begn no one in the—the—world that cares a straw for me—this twenty years."

He fairly wept aloud.

"Well, then, more's the pity for you. If you had, they wouldn't have let you make such a puppy of yourself—and at your landlady's expense, too.

"You know you're a fool," said Mrs. Squallop, dropping her voice a little; for she was a MOTHER, after all, and she knew that what poor Titmouse had just stated was quite true.

She tried hard to feed the fire of her wrath, by forcing into her thoughts every aggravating topic against Titmouse that she could think of; but it became every moment harder and harder to do so, for she was consciously softening rapidly towards the weeping and miserable little object, on whom she had been heaping such violent and bitter abuse. He was a great fool, to be sure—he was very fond of fine clothes—he knew no better—he had, however, paid his rent well enough till lately—he was a very quiet, well-disposed lodger, for all she had known—he had given her youngest child a pear not long ago. Really, thought Mrs. Squallop, I may have gone a *little* too far.

"Come—it ain't no use crying in this way. It won't put money into your pocket, nor my rent into mine. You know you've wronged me, and I *must* be paid," she added, but in a still lower tone. She tried to cough away a certain rising, disagreeable sensation about her throat, that kept increasing; for Titmouse, having turned his back to hide the extent of his emotions, seemed half-choked with suppressed sobs.

"So you won't speak a word—not a word—to the woman you've injured so much?" inquired Mrs. Squallop, trying to assume a harsh tone; but her eyes were a little obstructed with tears.

"I—I *can't* speak," sobbed Titmouse. "I—I feel ready to drop—everybody hates me." Here he paused, and for some moments neither spoke. "I've been kept on my legs the whole day about the town by Mr. Tagrag, and had no dinner. I—I wish I was *dead*! I do!—you may take all I have—*here* it is," continued Titmouse, with his foot pushing towards Mrs. Squallop the old hair trunk that contained all his little finery. "I shan't want them much longer, for I'm turned out of my situation."

This was too much for Mrs. Squallop, and she was obliged to wipe her full eyes with the corner of her apron, without saying a word. Her heart smote her for the misery she had inflicted on one who seemed quite broken down. Pity suddenly flew, fluttering his wings—soft dove!—into her heart, and put to flight in one instant all her outraged feelings. "Come, Mr. Titmouse," said she, in quite an altered tone, "never mind *me*; I'm a plain-spoken woman enough, I daresay—and often say more than I mean—for I know I ain't over particular when my blood's up—but—lord!—I—I wouldn't hurt a hair of your head, poor chap!—for all I've said—no, not for double the rent you owe me. Come! don't go on so, Mr. Titmouse—what's the use?—it's all quite—over—I'm so sorry—*Lord*! if I'd *really* thought," she almost sobbed, "you'd been so—so—why, I'd have waited till to-morrow night before I'd said a word. But, Mr. Titmouse,

since you haven't had any dinner, won't you have a mouthful of something—a bit of bread and cheese?—I'll soon fetch you up a bit, and a drop of beer—we've just had it in for our suppers."

"No thank you—I can't—I can't eat!" sobbed Titmouse.

"Oh, bother it, but you *shall*! I'll go down and fetch it up in half a minute, as sure as my name's Squallop!" And out of the room and downstairs she bustled, glad of a moment to recover herself.

"Lord-a-mercy!" said she, on entering her room, to her eldest daughter and a neighbour who had just come in to supper, and while she hastily cut a thick hunch of bread and a good slice of cheese. "There, I've been a-rating that poor little chap up at the top room (my dandy lodger, you know) like anything—and I really don't think he's had a morsel of victuals in his belly this precious day; and I've made him cry, poor soul! as if his heart would break. Pour him out half a pint of that beer, Sally—a good half-pint, mind!—I'm going to take it upstairs directly. I've gone a little too far with him, I do think; but it's all of that nasty old Gripes; I've been wrong all the day through it! How I hate the sight of old Gripes! What odious-looking people they do get to collect the rates and taxes, to be sure! Poor chap!" she continued, as she wiped out a plate with her apron, and put into it the bread and cheese, with a knife, "he offered me a chair when I went in, so uncommon civil-like, that it took me a good while before I could get myself into the humour to *give* it to him as I wanted. And he's no father nor mother (half of which has happened to *you*, Sal, and the rest will happen one of these days, you know?) and he's not such a very bad lodger, after all, though he *does* get a little behindhand now and then, and though he turns out every Sunday like a lord, poor fool—as my poor husband used to say, 'with a shining back and an empty belly!'"

"But that's no reason why honest people should be kept out of their own, to feed his pride," interposed her neighbour, a skinny old widow, who had never had chick nor child, and was always behind with her own rent; but whose efforts were not worth distraining upon. "I'd get hold of some of his fine crinum-cranums and jimcracks, for security-like, if I were you; I would *indeed*."

"Why—no, poor soul—I hardly like; he's a vain creature, and puts everything he can on his back, to be sure; but he ain't quite a *rogue* neither."

"Ah, ha, Mrs. Squallop—you're such a simple soul!—won't my fine gentleman make off with his finery after to-night?"

"Well, I shouldn't have thought it! To be sure, he may! Really, there *can't* be much harm in asking him (in a proper kind of way) to deposit one of his fine things with me, by way of security—that ring of his, you know—eh?—Well, I'll try it, anyhow," said Mrs. Squallop, and she set off upstairs.

"I know what I should do, if he was a lodger of mine, that's all," said her visitor, as Mrs. Squallop quitted the room—vexed to find the supper so considerably and unexpectedly diminished, especially as to the pot of porter, which she strongly suspected would not be replenished.

"There," said Mrs. Squallop, setting down on the table what she had brought for Titmouse; "there's a bit of supper for you; and you're welcome to it, I'm sure, Mr. Titmouse."

"Thank you, thank you—I can't eat," said he, casting, however, upon the victuals a hungry eye, which belied what he said, while in his heart he longed to be left alone with them for about three minutes.

"Come, don't be ashamed—fall to work—it's good, wholesome victuals," said she, lifting the table near to the edge of the bed, on the side of which he was sitting, and taking up the two shillings lying on the table—"and capital good beer, I warrant me: you'll sleep like a top after it."

"You're uncommon kind, Mrs. Squallop; but I shan't get a wink of sleep to-night for thinking——"

"Oh, bother your thinking! Let me begin to see you eat a bit. Well, I suppose you don't like to eat and drink before me, so I'll go." [Here arose a sudden conflict in the good woman's mind, whether or not she should act on the suggestion which had been put into her head downstairs. She was on the point of yielding to the impulse of her own good-natured though coarse feelings, but at last—] "I—I—daresay, Mr. Titmouse, you mean what's right and straightforward," she stammered.

"Yes, Mrs. Squallop—you may keep those two shillings; they're the last farthing I have in the whole world."

"No—hem! hem!—hem! I was just suddenly a-thinking—now, can't you guess, Mr. Titmouse?"

"What, Mrs. Squallop?" inquired Titmouse, meekly but anxiously.

"Why, suppose now—if it were only to raise ten shillings with old Balls, round the corner, on one of those fine things of yours—your ring, say." [Titmouse's heart sank within him.] "Well, well—never mind—don't fear," said Mrs. Squallop, observing him suddenly turn pale again. "I—I only thought—but never mind! it don't signify—good night! we can talk about that to-morrow—good night!—a good night's rest to you, Mr. Titmouse!" and the next moment he heard her heavy step descending the stairs. Several minutes had elapsed before he could revive from the agitation into which he had been thrown by her last proposal; but, within ten minutes of her quitting the room, there stood before him, on the table, an empty plate and jug.

SAMUEL WARREN.

From "Ten Thousand a Year."

THE LEGEND OF LURLEY.

THE bell for the compline, with echoing roar,
Had called to their Mass the young monks of St. Goar,

And their banquet they left, and its bacchanal strains,

With a little too much Rhenish wine in their brains;

For in ages of yore,

The young monks of St. Goar

Were wilder than any monks since or before;

You'd have thought that each merry-eyed shaven young spark

Had come up the Rhine from the Convent of Lark.

At last it was over, the prayers were said,

And the monks swarmed giddily off to bed,

Like a cluster of tipsy bees.

Within 'twas all snug; but the north wind with-out

Was indulging itself in a terrible rout,
As chimneys and gables it blew in and out,
And rattled the vanes and the casements about;
Now mimicking laughter, shriek, whistle, and shout;

Sometimes whirling off a loose pantile or spout

To the cloisters below, with a deuce of a clout,

Or stripping a branch from the trees.

At length in the corridors old was no step heard,
But all was as still as the night when Jack Sheppard

With footstep as stealthily as panther or leopard,

Escaped from his dread doom

By leaving the "red room,"

Exclaiming, as if all upbraiding to smother,

"Each brick I take out brings me nearer my mother!"

(If you ask for the last rhyme to whom I'm in debt,

I confess that it comes from the song of "We met,"

In which some young lady, much given to languish,

Abuses her mother for causing her anguish.)

But young Father Winkle he went not to sleep,

For he had that night an appointment to keep;

So stealthily down the back stairs he did creep,

And crossing the cloister, whilst sounded the hour,

He reached the old gate of the almoner's tower,

Where, coaxing the lock with a huge Gothic key,

He let in the guest he expected to see.

It was not a penitent come to confess,

Nor a foot-weary pilgrim in want or distress,

But—O *pudor!* O *mores!*—a beautiful girl!

Who enter'd the room with a bound and a twirl,

While the "omnibus" heads would have set in whirl;

Though pretty Cerito most jealous might feel,

With Planquet, and Sheffer, and little Camille,

In a very short dress of the loveliest green,
More fine and transparent than ever was seen
Bouffed by a *jups* of the best *crinoline*.

By what chance *she*

First came to be

Within St. Goar's proud monastery

We know not well ;

• But the chronicles tell

Qu'elle avoit une gorge extrêmement belle.

Young Father Winkle fondly gazed upon this
lovely form,

Through whose fair skin the vivid blood was blushing
young and warm,

And felt how beauty's presence proved a "comfort
in a storm."

He looked upon her flowing hair, so glossy, dark,
and long,

Her eyes so bright, whose magic might cannot be
told in song,

And then his conscience whisper'd he was doing
wrong,

Although he thought in such a case the fault
might be excused ;

For when, by some fair creature's guiles, poor mortals
are amused,

Their just ideas of right and wrong are terribly
confused ;

However firm our self-command, all resolution
trips

Beneath the mesmerising thrill of woman's ruby
lips.

But 'tis an adage known full well

That folks should never kiss and tell,

Or else we might have shown

That the first meeting of the two

And greeting eke which did ensue,

Was not of words alone.

"Now come with me," the fair one cried,

"In these dull cells no longer bide ;

I will become thy river-bride,

And o'er my realms thou shalt preside.

Away—the dawn is near ;

The wind is hush'd—the storm has pass'd—

The sky no longer is o'ercast ;

And see, the moon begins to shine

Upon the mountains of the Rhine

In radiance bright and clear.

Then come with me, and we will go

Where the rocks of coral grow,"—

(I've heard those lines before, I know).

Father Winkle cried, "Stay !

I've a trifle to say

• Ere thus from my duties you draw me astray.

My beautiful Lurley, one instant delay—

Each wish that you utter I burn to obey ;

But, in truth, love, I don't very well see my way ;

For though many people I've met heretofore

Find keeping their heads above water a bore,

Yet keeping mine under would puzzle me more.

With your own pretty self, as my sentiments
prove,

I'm over my head and my ears now in love,

And I cannot well see what we gain by the move."

Replied Lurline, "My dear,

You have nothing to fear ;

You would sleep just as well in the Rhine's bed as
here."

Said Winkle, said he,

"That bed won't do for me,

For its bedding would nothing but winding-sheets
be,

And I can't bear wet blanket in any degree.

In accepting your offer, to me it seems clear,

That I only should get in so novel a sphere,

Not my bed and my board, but my bed and my
bier."

"My Winkle," said Lurline, repressing a frown,

"The bed of the Rhine is of costliest down."

"Yes, down at the bottom, my own one, I know,

But I'm downy, too : no—I don't think I'll go !"

Then Lurline looked mournfully up in his eye,

With a face at once impudent, tearful, and sly,

And a sweet *petite mine*, as if going to cry,

As she said, "Can it be ? would you leave me to
die ?

Farewell, cruel Winkle ; from hence I shall fly.

Think of Lurline—sometimes—I am going—good
bye !"

Thus speaking, the nymph waved her hand in
adieu,

• And ere he could answer, dissolved like a view.

But fair Lurline knew

What was sure to accrue,

When from Winkle's fond eyes she so quickly with-
drew.

And she said to herself, as she slipped through the
wall,

"I was never yet foild—you'll be mine, after
all !"

There's a boat

That's afloat

On the edge of the Rhine :

With a sail

When a gale

Should blow on the right line ;

And Winkle had heard of a jolly young waterman,

Who at Goarhausen used for to ply,

So he stay'd not a second ; you would not have
thought a man

Not over lean could so rapidly fly.

And down to the river he ran like a shot ;

But when he arrived there the boatman was not :

For, during the night-time all traffic was dull,

And the waterman, taking his rest in the lull,

With an eider-down pillow had feather'd his skull.

But there lay the barky, sail, rudder, and oar,

All properly stamp'd with the cross of St. Goar,

cheese, these few lines will not have been traced in vain.

"Waiter!" There is a falseness in the very appellation. The customer is the waiter, not the man in evening dress. The hours of these persons are long, I know, but so are the "few minutes" which they tell you must elapse before a certain dish can be ready. Their entire vocabulary is carefully calculated to mislead. They say "Coming directly!" and incontinently dive into regions inaccessible to the general public. At certain hostilities that I know in the Strand, in Fleet Street, and in Piccadilly, my or any one's appearance at an empty table is the signal for the waiter in charge of that table to go away and lie down in the back premises and have half an hour's nap. There will always be five or six waiters actively engaged in stacking spoons and forks on and flicking crumbs off tables where there are no customers to be served. These will pass you by very quickly and avoid encountering your anxious eye. When you have become desperate, and it is no longer possible to altogether ignore you, one of these triflers, more civil than the rest—or for aught I know selected by lot among his *confrères*—will step forward and say that "your waiter will be here directly." Under these circumstances I have occasionally asked humbly of my informant if he has a seat disengaged at one of the tables which he honours by his attendance. But this is an inexperienced thing to do. For though the apparently civil waiter will conduct you to what he describes as his own table, *you will never see him again*; and your mortification will be complete when you observe that the waiter of the table which you have left has just returned, and is now standing about doing nothing. He would, however, rather drop down dead than move so much as his little finger on your behalf, however hungry or thirsty, or both, you may be. By this time he will have learnt from one of his colleagues that you have risen from his table because you could get no attention, and he will be only too delighted to reflect that, while you look faint for want of food, and while your black and swollen tongue is lolling out of your mouth for want of a drink, the waiter to whose care you have so testily transferred yourself is even now occupying his vacated position on the sofa upstairs.

Faugh! The conduct of waiters, not only in England, but in every part of the civilised globe in which I have travelled, is abominable. In Canterbury or Colombo, they are equally casual. Brighton and Bombay reproduce the same types; you will get much the same treatment in Hong Kong as at Harwich. Waiters are the only class of men for whom I never had and never shall have the smallest consideration. For years they made my life a burden, and even now they exasperate me beyond endurance on the occasions—which mercifully become rarer and rarer—when they have me in their

grasp. In their grasp, did I say? Go into an hotel, and the waiter has you by the throat! And he will not fail to show you whom he considers the better man.

When I think of the long-drawn minutes of refined torture—mounting up in the aggregate to hours, days, weeks and months, exposed as I was to their brutality during a course of years; when I remember the criminal stupidity and the cynical offensiveness of the vast majority of waiters with whom I have had to deal; when I reflect how generous I have been to them as a class, and how scandalously they have requited me as a body—I feel that mere boiling in oil would be but an inadequate return for their grudging favours and their studied neglect.

Until I began this lecture I should not have thought I could have felt so bitterly towards any section of my fellow-creatures. Marriages, births, deaths, bankruptcies, political feuds, county councils, and county-court summonses have tended to blunt any active hostilities that may once have burned in this breast. But when, after having done with waiters as I thought, some years ago, I find myself once more brought face to face with them, the old Adam crops up within me, and I will not be such a time-server as to refrain from trying to injure those who have it not in their power to hurt me any more. On the contrary, I will maintain (unto my dying day, sirs), that the conduct, the attitude, the demeanour, and the appearance of waiters as a class form not only an incentive, but an invitation to crime; their very existence is *contra bonos mores*, and (I suspect) repugnant to Holy Scripture.

Fortunately for us who keep up large establishments, where we are not compelled to order a chop and then read yesterday's paper for three-quarters of an hour while it is being overdone, there exists another class of "waiter," and of the female persuasion. My table is tended by neat-handed maid-servants in muslin aprons and mob-caps, as advertised. My wife sees that they do their duty, that their shoes do not creak, and that they do not openly drink spirits. So I do not mind so much when they steal up behind me with a dish of potatoes and breathe on my head. The girl-waiter is the girl for me. We have a very nice one called Phyllis, and she is almost my only joy.

PERCY REEVE.

By permission of the Author.

MY FIRST ROMANCE.

- A LITTLE head of golden curls,
Two roguish little eyes;
- A soft sweet voice, that seemed to me
Like music from the skies!

And if I only heard that voice,
Or met those eyes by chance,
My face would burn, my brain would swim,
I'd feel so strange in every limb,
For joy rushed rippling to the brim—
It was my first romance!

A snow-white frock and scarlet sash—
As neat as a new pin;
A little bonnet for the sun,
With ribbons round her chin;—
And if, from out that bonnet's shade,
She gave me but a glance,
My heart would thump against my side,
And though my mouth was open wide,
I couldn't speak—my tongue seemed tied—
It was my first romance!

We both went to the village school—
Its hum I still can hear!
But what to me were verbs and nouns
When she was standing near!
Her name? there,—really I forget—
'Twas Josephine perchance;—
Such things grow hazy when we're men,
For how old was this youngster then;
Now, let me see—not more than ten—
It was my first romance!

But well do I remember once
I fell into disgrace;
My eyes went wandering round the class,
And saw her angel face!
When suddenly the master asked:—
"Who killed the King of France?"
I scratched my head—'twas all the same—
And blushed like fire, for fear and shame;
But, goodness me, was I to blame?
It was my first romance!

I'd carry home her books and slate—
And thought them light to bear;
Then, hand in hand, we'd jog along—
A quaint, old-fashioned pair!
I'd help her with her lessons—just
My prospects to advance;—
And if the boys to her were rude,
I'd thrash them every one, I would;
Love put me in a desperate mood—
It was my first romance!

I think she must have loved me, too,
That bright-eyed child divine!
She often gave me half her sweets—
I gave her all of mine!
And, for her sake, to break my neck
I'd gladly run the chance;
I climbed the fruit-trees by the score,
And when I fell, I'd mount for more,
Until I filled her pinafore—
It was my first romance!

They all remain, those early scenes
That blessed our blissful hours;
Her cottage, with the lilac bush,
The garden, gay with flowers;—
And through the latticed windows still
The golden sunbeams dance;—
I see the pathway leading home,
And meadows, where we used to roam;
My eyes fill when these memories come—
It was my first romance!

Where is she now, that fair-haired girl
Who turned my little brain?
She kissed me when she left the school—
We never met again!
I sometimes see her in my dreams—
It all seems like a trance!
Ah! 'twas in later years I knew
The friendships that we keep are few,
But Childhood's love is deep and true—
Such was my first romance!

J. REDDIE MALLET.

A Chapter from "A Life's History, told in Homely Verse."
By permission of the Author.
Published by Messrs. RICHARD BENTLEY & SON.

"FIRE STRAIGHT!"

You'll fire straight, comrades! They gave me
Five minutes, the officer said;
Five minutes, and when they are counted,
I shall lie at your feet there, lie dead!
I shall know all about it, what's coming,
And what it has meant, and the rest;
I shall know, but not come back to tell it;
You'll aim at the head and the breast!

"Time for a prayer, my poor fellow."
God bless him! his blue eyes were dim;
I'd have followed him, choose where he led me,
So they'd spared me for battle and him.
Prayer! I don't know, it's something like funking
To pray, when all else is too late;
Like a rat driven into a corner,
I mayn't bite for my life. You'll shoot straight.

I remember the prayer that she taught me,
The old mother, up in the north;
She'd kneel when nor'-easters were blowing,
And the cobble was out on the Forth;
But for all that she prayed the squall caught
them,
And swamped them, both skipper and boat:
It cheered her when I took the shilling,*
'Twas better than going afloat.

Was it! Maybe. My stripes—will you ask him,
When you've fired, and all of it's done,
If she, the old woman may have them,
For the sake of her ne'er-do-well son?

Could he say I was "shot?" She's nigh four-score,

Might she think—with my face to the foe?
There's no need she should hear of this morning,
And the "firing party," you know.

And I was no coward, eh, comrades?

'Twas the blink of a dark Spanish eye

That lured me from post and from duty;

Oh, yes, it is fair I should die!

I'd like to have lain 'mid the heather,

Here's the coat and the watch, take 'em, mate;

Time's up, the great Captain is Mercy;

All comes right under Him. Now, shoot straight.

SUSAN K. PHILLIPS.

By permission of the Author.

SCENE FROM "THE HEIR-AT-LAW."

DOCTOR PANGLOSS. DICK DOWLAS. WAITER.

Enter DOCTOR PANGLOSS.

*PAN. Let the chariot turn about, Doctor Pangloss in a lord's chariot! "Curru portatur eodem." Juvenal.—Hem! Waiter!

Enter WAITER.

WAIT. Sir!

PAN. Have you any gentleman here who arrived this morning?

WAIT. There's one in the house now, sir.

PAN. Is he juvenile?

WAIT. No, sir; he's Derbyshire.

PAN. He! he! he! Of what appearance is the gentleman?

WAIT. Why, plaguy poor, sir.

PAN. "I hold him rich al had he not a shorte." Chaucer.—Hem! Denominated the Honourable Mr. Dowlas?

WAIT. Honourable? He left his name plain Dowlas at the bar, sir.

PAN. Plain Dowlas, did he? That will do. "For all the rest is leather and prunella." Pope.—Hem! Tell Mr. Dowlas, a gentleman requests the honour of an interview.

WAIT. This is his room, sir. He has but just stepped into our parcel warehouse; he'll be with you directly. *[Exit.]*

PAN. Never before did honour and affluence let fall such a shower on the head of Doctor Pangloss. Fortune, I thank thee! Propitious goddess, I am grateful! I, thy favoured child, who commenced his career in the loftiest apartment of a muffin-maker in Milk Alley! Little did I think—"Good easy man," Shakespeare.—Hem! of the riches and "literary dignity which now—

Enter DICK.

DICK. Well, where is the man that wants—*[Seeing PANGLOSS.]*—Oh, you are he, I suppose?

PAN. I am the man, young gentleman. "Homo sum," Terence.—Hem! Sir, the person who now presumes to address you is Peter Pangloss, to whose name, in the College of Aberdeen, is subjoined LL.D., signifying Doctor of Laws; to which has been recently added the distinction of A double S, the Roman initials for an Associate of the Society of Arts.

DICK. Sir, I am your most obedient, Richard Dowlas, to whose name, in his tailor's bill, is subjoined DR., signifying Debtor; to which are added L.S.D., the Roman initials for pounds, shillings, and pence. But what are your commands with me, Doctor?

PAN. I have the honour, young gentleman, of being deputed an ambassador to you from your father.

DICK. Then you have the honour to be ambassador of as good-natured an old fellow as ever sold a ha'porth of cheese in a chandler's shop.

PAN. Pardon me, if, on the subject of your father's cheese, I advise you to be as mute as a mouse in one, for the future! 'Twere better to keep that "alta mente repositum." Virgil.—Hem!

DICK. Why, what's the matter! Any misfortune? Broke, I fear.

PAN. No, not broke; but his name, as 'tis customary in these cases, has appeared in the Gazette.

DICK. Not broke, but Gazetted! Why, zounds!

PAN. Check your passions—learn philosophy. When the wife of the great Socrates threw a—hem—threw a tea-pot at his erudite head, he was as cool as a cucumber. When Plato—

DICK. Hang Plato! What of my father?

PAN. Don't curse Plato; the bees swarmed round his mellifluous mouth as soon as he was swaddled. "Cum in cunis apes in labellis consediscent." Cicero.—Hem!

DICK. I wish you had a swarm round yours, with all my heart! Come to the point.

PAN. In due time. But calm your choler. "Ira furor brevis est," Horace.—Hem! Read this. *[Producing a letter.]*

DICK. *[Reads.]* "Dear Dick,—This comes to inform you that I am in a perfect state of health, hoping you are the same."—Ah, that's the old beginning.—"It was my lot last week to be made"—Ay, a bankrupt, I suppose!—"To be made a"—What?—"To be made a *[Spelling]* P.E.A.R."—A peer! to be made a peer! What does he mean by that?

PAN. A peer—a peer of the realm. His lordship's orthography is a little loose; but several of his equals countenance the custom. Lord Logger-head always spells physician with an F.

DICK. A peer! What, my father? I'm electrified.—Old Daniel Dowlas made a peer! But let

me see. [*Reading.*] "A peer of the realm—Lawyer Ferrit got me my title"—tit—oh, title!—"and an estate of fifteen thousand per annum, by making me out next of kin to old Lord Duberly, because he died without—without heir." 'Tis an odd reason, by-the-by, to be next of kin to a nobleman because he died bald!

PAN. His lordship means heir—heir to the estate. We shall meliorate his style speedily. "Reform it altogether." Shakespeare.—Hem!

DICK. [*Reading.*] "I send my carrot—" Carrot! PAN. He! he! he! Chariot, his Lordship means. "Chariot—a little coach," Johnson.—Hem!

DICK. "With Doctor Pangloss in it. Respect him, for he's an LL.D., and moreover an A double S—[*they bow*]—and I have made him your tutorer. Come with the Doctor to my house in Hanover Square,—Hanover Square!—"I remain, your affectionate father to command,—Duberly."

PAN. That's his lordship's title.

DICK. Waiter!

Enter WAITER.

Pop my clothes and linen into the carriage; they are in that bundle.

PAN. Waiter, put all the Honourable Mr. Dowlas's clothes and linen into his father's, Lord Duberly's, chariot.

WAIT. Where are they all, sir?

PAN. All wrapped up in the Honourable Mr. Dowlas's pocket-handkerchief.

DICK. Now let us be off.

PAN. I come, most worthy pupil. [*Exeunt.*]

GEORGE COLEMAN THE YOUNGER.

THE BABY BABOON.

'Twas long, long ago, in the days of my youth,

When I was a dashing young Johnnie,
Hard-working, and famous for telling the truth;

They made me vice-consul at Bonny.

I lived in a residence built of bamboo,

With tropical creepers around it;

I kept a white cat, and a black cockatoo,

And very delightful I found it;

But Fate had ordain'd I should own very soon

A sweeter companion—a baby Baboon.

It happen'd one morning, when out with my gup—
(*'Twas seldom indeed, I forgot it*)—

I found a big monkey asleep in the sun,

So tempting a mark that I shot it.

Alas! 'twas a mother-baboon and her child,

She died in so human a fashion,

The poor little infant with sorrow was wild,

I wept with remorse and compassion,

And vow'd by the sun in the heavens at noon,

I'd cherish that orphan, the baby Baboon.

I carried him home to my primitive hut,
A couch of soft feathers I spread him,
His teeth were unequal to cracking a nut,
So on rice, milk and sago I fed him;
I watch'd him by night, and I watch'd him by day,
With more than the love of a brother;
I murmur'd "I mean to, as far as I may,
Make up for the loss of your mother;
So I'll rock you to sleep, and I'll feed with a spoon
My beautiful, bright little baby Baboon!"

And as he grew older, he grew more attach'd,
I kept him continually near me,
Though Poll screamed in anger, and Puss hiss'd and scratch'd,

Still Pongo would comfort and cheer me;
He swung from the bellrope, he jump'd over sticks,
He conjured with cards, hats, and money,—
In short, play'd a thousand fantastical tricks,
No creature was ever so funny.

A "queer little cuss," an "amoozin' young coon"
(As Yankees would say) was my baby Baboon.

Oh! never was any one blest with a friend
More faithful, devoted and fervent,
So clever and useful:—he used to attend
Upon me in place of a servant;
In brushing my garments, and blacking my boots,
He show'd himself careful and handy;
He fann'd me to slumber, he lit my cheroots,
He brought me my soda-and-brandy:
Your Burnses may boast of their braw "Bonnie Doon,"

Give me Bonny Town—with my baby Baboon.

He learnt the flute, fiddle, and banjo—the use
Of needles, thread, scissors and thimbles,
To read and to write, and I tried to reduce
His own monkey language to symbols;
He'd grin with delight at a comical tale,
And weep like a child at a sad one;
To win me to mirth, if my spirits should fail,
He'd caper and dance like a mad one;
He served me as harlequin, clown, pantaloon,
A host in himself was this baby Baboon.

And Pongo was disinterested and true,
No fawning, self-seeking deceiver,
He proved his affection by nursing me through
A dreadful malarial fever;
His mixing my medicines used to evince
Great skill, and a clear comprehension,
I've suffer'd in various hospitals since
But never received such attention:
Your doctor prescribes in a gilded saloon,
And yet he can't cure like my baby Baboon.

One night I was suddenly roused from my sleep
By howling, and shrieking, and yelling,
As if all the fiends from the nethermost deep
Had come and surrounded my dwelling;

I saw in the gloom diabolical shapes,
Like nightmares that haunt us in slumber;
An army of monkeys, and mandrills, and apes,
Orangs and baboons without number;
"Good heavens!" I cried, as I sank in a swoon,
"They've come to recover that baby Baboon!"

'Twas true! for his father, his kith and his kin,
Had sworn deadly vengeance—and meant it;
With gibber and grin all the tribe clamber'd in,
No effort of mine could prevent it.
They ransack'd the place, till my home was a wreck,
They scratch'd, bit, belabour'd, and shook me,
They seized me at last by the scruff of the neck,
And down to the river they took me;
'They soused me right into a fetid lagoon,
And then scuttled off—with the baby Baboon.

Ah! where is he now?—among monkeys or men,
A captive, or leader of legions?
Alive or at rest?—I have travelled since then
Through many adventures and regions;
But whatever I do, or wherever I go,
No power can make me forget him,
As long as I live on this planet below
I never shall cease to regret him;
And oft in the night, at the full of the moon,
I dream of my lost one—my baby Baboon.

WALTER PARKE.

By permission of the Author.

THE FUGGLETON SCIENTIFIC CLUB.

THE annual meeting of the Fuggleton Scientific Club was held the evening before last at the club's rooms, which were crowded. As I happened to be present, I am in a position to state that the proceedings were unusually lively. This is what I recollect of it.

The President, Mr. Grippard, who was loudly cheered on rising, said:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to find so many of our members here to-night. First of all, we shall look into the accounts, and after that the Professors will speak; but I must ask them not to speak very fast, as the reporters are not swift writers. Mr. Graball the treasurer, and Mr. Fleetfoote, the secretary, I am sorry to say, are absent. I have heard that they are gone for a holiday to unknown parts; but Mr. Graball has left a statement of accounts. The total amount of subscriptions received is £2000, and the disbursements are—Rent of rooms, £75; musical treat for the deaf and dumb of the town, £20; visit of the blind to the Art Gallery (expenses), £5; sundries, £1000; and cash in hand, £200; total £2000.

"The only item which calls for comment is 'sun-

dries, £1000,' but our worthy treasurer will no doubt be able to explain this when he returns. As to the cash in hand, well, I suppose he has taken it with him for security, because it is not in the bank. Professor Knowall will now expound his great scheme of 'How to Jump from a Monument.'"

The Professor, who rose amidst loud applause, prefaced his exposition by remarking that a change of air in the neighbourhood of Dartmoor, at the expense of the Government, would be very beneficial to the treasurer (cheers).

"Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—My scheme is the outcome of many years of sedulous and unremitting study. For its perfection I have studied agriculture, botany, theology, book-keeping, hydrology, Arabic, and trigonology. After having mastered these subjects I commenced cogitating, and as the result of this cogitation, I came to the conclusion that if a man can jump from a low wall, by constant practice he will be able to jump from a monument! I hired a labourer to dig a large round hole, not very deep, in my back garden, and practised jumping into it. Every morning the man dug it deeper, so deep indeed that I had to be pulled up out of it. At last I deemed myself competent to jump from my summer-house, which accordingly I did; and beyond sustaining a few bruises and a broken arm I was successful. Now, I can do it quite easily. I may mention that I still jump into the hole, which has become very deep; but I have a ladder down the side of it to ascend by. I practise for half an hour every day. The worst of it is that at least two men are required to bale out the water which accumulates at the bottom. And what with the digging, and the baling and the labourers, my garden is now like a brickyard. But I do not care, for is it not in the interests of science, and will not unborn generations reap the benefit? Think of the benefit that would be conferred upon mankind if my scheme were universally adopted? Why, a man could ascend the Eiffel Tower and jump off it with as much ease and safety as if he were jumping from an express train. I propose that this club should send a deputation to Parliament petitioning that my scheme be adopted by the Education Department, and that a hole be dug in connection with every Board School, so that the scholars may practise in the manner I have just explained to you." (Loud and continued applause.)

Mr. Blackburn then rose and said the practicability of Professor Knowall's scheme was beyond doubt, and it would prove one of the greatest blessings to mankind. He, Mr. Blackburn, was the owner of several mines. Now, suppose his miners could jump down the shafts, what a boon it would be! Most certainly he would consult them and see if they were willing to learn.

The President remarked that it was one of the most original schemes he had ever heard of.

The proceedings were here interrupted by the reporters asking for time to sharpen their pencils.

Professor Myope now rose amidst a profound silence and said: "Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,—My scheme is 'How to divide £4 among five men so that they shall all have £1 each.' I must first mention that it is as yet only a theory. However, I will explain the theory. Arrange the men in a line, and lay the money in like manner on a table. Then ask the first man to go into the next room. Give the first sovereign to the second man; the second sovereign to the third man; the third sovereign to the fourth man; and then send for the man in the other room and give him the fourth sovereign."

The President said that it sounded perfect, but they would prove it then and there. Accordingly five men were selected from the audience, and £4 borrowed from an old lady in the front seats. The first man was sent into the next room, and the money divided; but it was found that, after the fourth man and the man in the other room had received a sovereign, there still remained the fifth man!

Professor Myope thereupon was seized with a fit and had to be carried out.

The President said he had forgotten who lent the money, but he would ask the proper parties to come forward and claim it.

Then ensued a scene worthy of an Irish fair; at least half of the entire audience coming forward with a rush and claiming the four pounds. Chairs were upset, and some of the men even got to fighting. Ladies fainted and children screamed. At length Dr. Swindlem rose, and above the frightful uproar managed to stammer out that such a state of things was scandalous in a Christian community; everybody knew that he and the President had lent the money. This was seconded by a blind old gentleman and the President's wife. The £4 accordingly was divided between Mr. Griphard and Dr. Swindlem; then the people returned to their places, not without much murmuring. It was noticed that the President took one sovereign and his wife the other, and Dr. Swindlem handed the blind old gentleman a sovereign.

This matter settled, Professor Scragg, rising, said that his scheme was:—"How to build a ship in one minute." It was very simple—in fact, nothing more than a matter of proportion. If it took fifty men two years to build a ship, 1,051,200 men could do it in one minute. This number of men should be put into a dockyard with the requisite wood and iron, and at a given signal commence working. And lo! in one minute there would arise the stately masts of the Leviathan. 63,072,000 men could build it in a second! (Voice from the audience: "Which dockyard would you put 'em in?")

The President said that Professor Scragg's lecture was the last on the programme. They had

had an intellectual treat that evening. He would call upon all to give a hearty vote of thanks to the learned gentlemen. He had almost forgotten to thank Mr. Moneybags for the gift to the Institute of his famous picture, "Cleopatra discovering a rent in her ball-dress," as exhibited at the Royal Academy, and valued at £10,000. But Mr. Moneybags had not sent any nails or cord to hang it up with.

The proceedings then terminated.

Yesterday at the Fuggleton Police Court, Arthur Griphard, Mrs. Griphard, Dr. Stonybroke Swindlem, and John Graspit were charged with uttering counterfeit sovereigns. The prisoners were remanded, bail being refused.

ANTHONY WAGNER.

By permission of the Author.

● VERSES ON A CAT.

A CAT in distress,
Nothing more, nothing less:—
Good folks, I must faithfully tell ye,
As I am a sinner,
It waits for some dinner
To stuff out its own little belly.

You would not easily guess
All the modes of distress
Which torture the tenants of earth,
And the various evils
Which, like so many devils,
Attend the poor souls from their birth.

Some a living require,
And others desire
An old fellow out of the way:
And which is the best
I leave to be guessed,
For I cannot pretend to say.

One wants society,—
Another variety,—
Others, a tranquil life;
Some want food:
Others, as good,
Only want a wife.

But this poor little cat
Only wanted a rat
To stuff out its own little maw:
And it were as good
Some people had such food
To make them "hold their jaws."

P. B. SHELLEY.

NOTE.—This was Shelley's first poem, written at the age of eight.

A VISION OF SMOKE.

I HAD a dreadful vision in the silence of the night,
 I remember with precision every sound, and scent,
 and sight ;
 In my lonely chamber seated, I was puffing at my
 pipe,
 With imagination heated, till its fancies, over-
 ripe,
 Assumed immense proportions,
 And indulged in wild contortions,
 Producing strange abortions
 Of a pantomimic type ;
 I was smoking, smoking, smoking
 My familiar meerschaum pipe.

Then the room became a playhouse, and the house
 began to fill,
 'Twas a tragic, not a gay house ; there was "Ham-
 let" in the bill.
 The Ghost was standing grimly, while the Prince
 before him bow'd,
 And both were looming dimly thro' a dense in-
 creasing cloud ;
 It set me gasping, choking,
 Most astounding, most provoking,
 Why, the audience were smoking ;
 Every member of the crowd,
 They were smoking, smoking, smoking,
 And it seem'd to be allow'd !

Oh ! the stalls were overflowing with the fra-
 grance of cigars,
 And the pit with pipes was glowing, like the night-
 sky with its stars,
 Each near box seemed a far box, and the lights
 were farthing dips,
 Every box was a cigar-box,—and the "gods" were
 in eclipse ;
 And, what was most amazing,
 The ladies, too, were raising
 Grey fumes, with matches blazing,
 Cigarettes between their lips ;
 • They were smoking, smoking, smoking
 Little tubes with amber tips.

With difficulty breathing, for my chest was sore
 oppress'd,
 I had to take to wreathing rings of vapour, like the
 rest ;
 The air grew thicker, warmer, and it stagger'd me
 indeed,
 To find that each performer was indulging in the
 weed ;
 Yes, Hamlet in his sadness,
 King and Queen in all their badness,
 And Ophelia in her madness,
 Were indulging in the weed ;
 They were smoking, smoking, smoking,
 It was very odd indeed !

O, shade of the Immortal ! this was more than I
 can stand !
 I'd to struggle to, the portal of that reeking Stygian
 land !
 I could not sit the play out ; I should faint, or yell,
 or scream !—
 But I couldn't find my way out, and my horror was
 extreme !
 Till, in my room awaking,
 My nerves upset and shaking,
 My meerschaum falling, breaking,
 Soon I felt a joy supreme ;
 For that smoking, smoking, smoking
 Had been nothing but a dream !

WALTER PARKE.

By permission of the Author.

TUBAL CAIN.

OLD Tubal Cain was a man of might
 In days when earth was young ;
 By the fierce red light of his furnace bright
 The strokes of his hammer rung ;
 And he lifted high his brawny hand
 On the iron glowing clear,
 Till the sparks rushed out in scarlet showers
 As he fashioned the sword and spear.
 And he sang, " Hurrah for my handiwork !
 Hurrah for the spear and sword !
 Hurrah for the hand that shall wield them well,
 For he shall be King and lord ! "

To Tubal Cain came many a sire,
 As he wrought by his roaring fire,
 And each one prayed for the strong steel blade
 As the crown of his desire.
 And he made them weapons, sharp and strong,
 Till they shouted loud for glee,
 And gave him gifts of pearls and gold,
 And spoils of the forest free.
 And they sang, " Hurrah for Tubal Cain,
 Who hath given us strength anew !
 Hurrah for the smith ! hurrah for the fire !
 Hurrah for the metal true ! "

But a sudden change came o'er his heart
 Ere the setting of the sun ;
 And Tubal Cain was filled with pain
 For the evil he had done.
 He saw that men with rage and heat
 Made war upon their kind ;
 That the land was red with blood they shed,
 In their lust for carnage blind.
 And he said, " Alas that I ever made,
 • Or that skill of mine should plan,
 The spear and sword for man, whose joy
 Is to slay his fellow-man ! "

And for many a day old Tubal Cain
 Sat brooding o'er his woe,
 And his hand forbore to smite the ore,
 And his furnace smouldered low.
 But he rose at last with a cheerful face,
 And a bright courageous eye,
 And bared his strong right arm for work
 While the quick flames mounted high.
 And he sang, "Hurrah for my handiwork!"—
 And the red sparks lit the air,—
 Not alone for the blade was the bright steel made!"
 And he fashioned the first ploughshare.
 And men, taught wisdom from the past,
 In friendship joined their hands,
 Hung the sword in the hall, the spear on the wall,
 And ploughed the willing lands;
 And sang, "Hurrah for Tubal Cain!
 Our staunch good friend is he;
 And for the ploughshare and the plough
 To him our praise shall be!
 But while oppression lifts its head
 Or a tyrant would be lord,
 Though we may thank him for the plough,
 We'll not forget the sword!"

CHARLES MACKAY.

By permission of ERIC MACKAY, Esq

THE RED 'KERCHIEF.

SWEET was the breath of dying day,
 The dew was on the thorn,
 And the moon like a silver sickle rose
 Over the rip'ning corn.
 'Twas then I kissed my Letty dear
 (None saw but the gentle kine),
 As she gave for a gift her 'kerchief red,
 And said, "I am ever thine!"
 I sat on the stile alone once more
 Beneath the trysting tree,
 My coat all pendulous it hung
 Her 'kerchief fluttering free.
 And there I might have mused for aye,
 But a bull, in his anger flew
 At the maddening red—then aloft I rose
 To drop where the brambles grew.
 Now the corn it need not ripen much,
 I care not for my bread,
 And when I meet Miss Letty again
 I'll give her the 'kerchief red.
 Ah! now methinks the dew-drop winks
 Because it hides a thorn,
 And I ne'er behold the crescent moon
 But I seem to feel her horn.

F. P. DEMPSTER.

By permission of the Author.

THE MANAGER'S BENEFIT.

We were playing a three months' engagement, at
 Bellchester, out in the West:
 It's a town with a famous cathedral; but a sleepy
 old place at the best;
 For except on the day of the market, or during
 the annual fair,
 Or the week when they hold the Assizes, there
 isn't much going down there.
 True, the Church-folk encouraged the Drama, at
 least in a mild sort of way;
 But the people who went to the chapels, of course
 didn't go to the play.
 And as for the rest, with our talent, 'twas just
 throwing pearls before swine—
 Penny readings, the circus, and concerts were very
 much more in their line.
 So whatever the piece we presented, and no matter
 how well we might act,
 In the flourish about "crowded houses," there was
 often more fiction than fact.
 For although it was frequently stated that there
 wasn't a seat to be had,
 Yet between you and me, for the most part, the
 business was wickedly bad.
 'Twas a case of half salaries sometimes, and at last
 the receipts got so small
 That the period arrived when the "phantom"
 wasn't able to "ramble" at all.
 Yet for all that we stuck to the gov'nor—we knew
 that his money was good—
 Though he might be "behind" for the moment, he
 always paid up when he could.
 And we loved the old boy like a father, for there
 wasn't a kindlier man
 In the whole of the blessed profession than worthy
 old Manager Dan;
 With his noble white head and tall figure, and
 broad, beaming face, shaven clean,
 And his tales of the days when he acted at "the
 Lane," with Macready and Kean.

Well, at last matters came to a crisis, and the
 treasury funds sank so low
 That the manager called us together, and said he
 must shut up the show.
 "I am grieved at the parting, believe me," he
 exclaimed, with a tear in his eye;
 "But 'there's no way but this,' as the Bard says,
 so God bless you, dear friends, and good-bye."
 There were just a few moments of silence, for no
 one knew quite what to say,
 Though 'twas clear that we all felt unwilling to
 leave the old man in this way.
 So when some one at last put the question: "Well,
 what's it to be? Shall we go!"
 We replied, like a chorus of supers, with a loud
 and unanimous "No!"
 And we all crowded round the old fellow, and the
 men took a grip of his hand,

While the ladies impulsively kissed him, till he seemed altogether unmanned.

Then we said, if a week or two longer, he only would keep up the fight,

We'd go shares in the profits—if any—and give him a benefit night.

He agreed to accept our proposal, but declared if the benefit stood

In his name as a "draw" for the public, it must be for the general good.

So we settled affairs on that basis; then played "on the share" for a week,

And prepared an attractive performance for the night of the coming "bespeak."

Now it chanced that a great Prima Donna, renowned for her talents and wealth,

Was residing just then in our district to rest and recover her health.

There she lived in the strictest seclusion—was hardly, indeed to be seen,

Though the people all longed for a sight of the beautiful Opera Queen,

As they see her in London and Paris, arrayed, on the nights when she sings,

In her splendid and wonderful dresses, and diamonds given by kings.

"If we only could get her to help us," the manager said, with a sigh,

"'Twould be almost as good as a fortune—but there, it is hopeless to try."

Yet for all that he wrote to the Diva, describing our sorrowful plight,

And he asked her to grace with her presence his forthcoming benefit night.

Her reply came next day at rehearsal—of course we expected a "No;"

But the gov'nor exclaimed, "Why, God bless her, she says she *will come* to the show!"

And she came with her diamonds sparkling, and wearing her handsomest gown;

And the news of her coming attracted the wealthiest folks in the town,

As well as the great county gentry, from manors, and mansions, and halls,

Who took every seat in the boxes, and filled the "additional" stalls;

While the "popular parts" were so crowded that you couldn't find room for a mouse

In the pit or the gallery either; we never had half such a house.

And the rush even then wasn't over, for the people kept flocking in scores

Till the box-keepers had to stop "taking," and turn money away from the doors.

We were playing a popular drama, which in London had had a long run;

It contained many strong situations, and plenty of pathos and fun.

The performance at first dragged a little; for the eyes of the audience were bent

On the famous and beautiful lady; but it soon woke them up, and it went.

Yes, we did make it go, I can tell you, without any hitches or flaws,

Exciting now tears, and now laughter, and round upon round of applause;

And the people were all so delighted—pit, gallery, boxes, and stalls—

That at every fall of the curtain there was simply no end to the calls.

And we all felt immensely elated, as of course you may easily guess,

For the whole of the night's entertainment had proved a triumphant success.

There was just "half a length" with some business, to close the last scene of the play,

When a workman rushed on to the stage, with a terrible look of dismay.

He had slipped on a "property" mantle to cover his working attire;

And he whispered the gov'nor, "Ring down, sir; the gallery floor is on fire!"

For some lout in the "gods," who was smoking, had let fall a spark down below

Through the boards on the sawdust and rubbish, which it set in a smouldering glow.

But the audience had not yet perceived it, and our people in front did not dare

To attempt to prevent it from spreading, for fear of exciting a scare;

And we on the stage knew the danger, yet all remained cool and serene,

Playing on, as though nothing had happened, right through to the end of the scene.

But with hearts chilled and throbbing with terror, and filled with an eager desire

To hasten the end ere the people could know of their peril from fire.

Oh! the horror and dread of those moments, as in fancy there rose to my ears—

In the midst of the clap-trap and nonsense, the boisterous laughter and cheers—

All the sounds of the possible panic—the shouts and the screams of affright,

And the groans of the maimed and the dying, struck down in the desperate fight

To escape from the fiery demon, and its stifling sulphurous breath

Grew denser and denser and hotter in that temple of pleasure and death!

But the end came at last, and the signal was rung for the curtain to fall;

And it fell, between us and the audience, and hid them from sight like a pall.

Yet they ceased not their cheers and their clappings! Oh, God! would they never have done?

And they made us appear altogether, then called us by name, one by one,

Though we sought by our gestures and glances, as much as we dared, to beseech
 That they'd spare us this empty ovation; yet still there were cries for "a speech."
 So the manager stepped forward, and bowing to left and to right,
 Placed his hand on his heart, and said simply, "Thank you *all*, my kind friends, and good night."
 It was brief, but enough to content them: once more they applauded and cheered;
 Then they rose from their seats and departed, and soon the whole building was cleared.
 And 'twas time; for the last of the audience had hardly been seen to retire,
 When there crept through the house a faint odour—the first deadly symptom of fire.
 Then we rushed up the gallery staircase with blankets and buckets and pails,
 And like madmen we dragged up the benches, and tore up the boards with our nails;
 And we deluged the fierce burning masses with water in stream upon stream,
 Till we nearly stood stifled and blinded with volumes of smoke and hot steam.
 But we fought with the fiery danger a stubborn and desperate fight,
 Till we conquered our foe in the struggle, and quenched it and quelled it outright.
 'Twas the talk of the city next morning, how nobly we all had behaved,
 And how, thanks to our coolness and courage, some hundreds of lives had been saved,
 Then the great Prima Donna presented a beautiful diamond ring
 To the gov'nor, and made him an offer to come down one evening and sing;
 Which she did; and her promised appearance drew crowds to the playhouse once more,
 And at double the usual prices we took twice as much as before.
 And all through the season the business grew better and better each day,
 While even some pious Dissenters came down now and then to the play;
 For their preacher had said in a sermon that men who obeyed Duty's call,
 Like those worldly and frivolous actors, could not be so bad after all.
 So we played out our three months' engagement, and opened again the next year;
 And, indeed, in old Bellchester City, whenever we choose to appear,
 We are never in want of an audience, for the people recall with delight
 How we saved them from death and disaster on the Manager's Benefit Night.

E. J. GOODMAN.

By permission of the Author.

A LECTURE ON HUSBANDS.

(Delivered by a "NEW WOMAN.")

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!—I am addressing myself to the ladies more particularly, but the gentlemen present *may*, perhaps, be kind enough not to shuffle their feet about more than usual just because a woman is lecturing to them. Of course I know very well that, in their opinion—chivalrous creatures!—no woman has any business on the platform at all; that woman's place is at home minding the baby or washing up the tea-things, or sewing on *their* buttons (the pretty dears!), which they pull off next day, just because they're the quintessence, of clumsiness. Still, I've something to say on this occasion which I am sure it will do them good to hear, and which they will *profit* by, if it pleases them to pay any attention.

Well, ladies, what I am going to talk about to you this evening, the subject of my discourse, if I may so put it, is—Husbands. Yes, my dears, Husbands. A subject in which, of course, you all take a very natural interest, seeing that by the present ridiculous laws of our boasted civilisation most of you either are, or will become, regular bondslaves to the creatures; that you either have sworn or will have to swear, at the marriage altar, to love, honour, and obey them. Obey them, indeed! Fancy, my dears, if we only did carry out strictly the letter of that promise! Fancy, if we really did obey them! What would be the inevitable result? Chaos, ladies; utter and inevitable chaos! They would even have entire and uncontrolled power over the universe; while we, poor, down-trodden, yielding creatures that we are, would go to the wall more than ever; we should be reduced to the social status of Indian squaws, and imprisoned for life in suburban wigwams; while our lords and masters enjoyed themselves at the theatres and those reeking music-halls they're so fond of, just because they need not leave off drinking when they go there.

Now, I am entitled to speak with some authority on husbands, ladies, because I have had considerable experience; having battled through life with two of them already, and being now engaged in combating the ridiculous follies of a third. Yes, I have been three times married, and I dare say some of the unmarried girls among you may think I am to be envied; but I assure you that is far, far from being the case. Never, after my first experience of married life, would I again have ventured among the shoals and pitfalls of a matrimonial career but for the resolution to benefit my sex; to fight the good fight against the tyrant Man; to do what lay within my power to reduce him from his arrogant superiority and humble him to the dust. I have, I am proud to say, already humbled two to the dust, my dears, and a third is tottering—resisting ever, but still tottering, and gradually learning the moral

lesson, that woman is inferior to man in *no* respect, his superior in many! Yes, men, I repeat—and it is a fact that can be incontestibly proved—his superior in many.

• Every husband, ladies—mind, I don't say some husbands, or most husbands, but *every* husband—has *some* failing which he carefully conceals from you till after you are married, and which, if pandered to, is likely to plunge you for ever in domestic misery. With some it is obstinacy; with others, stopping out late; with others, drink; with others, meanness—this last being almost universal, my dears. A man comes and courts a girl, and makes her handsome presents while they're engaged, so that she cherishes the idea that he is a liberal soul; at the altar he endows her with all his worldly goods, and then what happens? He allows her as ridiculously small a sum as she will submit to for housekeeping, and expects her to treat him like a lord on it. And if, in her anxiety to satisfy his dainty appetite, she naturally runs into debt, it's something like this:—"Good heavens, Maria! however is it you can't make both ends meet? Do you suppose I'm made of money?" And so on. I know them, my dears; I know them by experience.

My first had this failing to a very marked extent. He used to allow me—bah! the very idea of any woman being allowed in that way is galling—he used to allow me five pounds a week to provide for himself, myself, and two servants. He expected out of that paltry sum to have the most elegant dinners, and all sorts of home comforts, too numerous to mention. Well, I let him have them, and, of course, ran up bills for them. Quarter-day came round, and he flew into a great rage. "Very well, Thomas," I said, "if you will allow me more money, I can pay for these things without getting into debt." "I absolutely can't afford to give you a single farthing more," he replied. "As you please," said I; and from that time I changed his diet. Instead of a nice little dinner every evening, it was cold mutton three times a week, and suet pudding every other day, with treacle on Sundays. After a time he pined for a change, and his appetite fell off. And then, the selfish brute, in order to obtain luxuries for himself again—I might have starved for all he'd have cared—he gave me an extra thirty shillings a week, which he had been well able to do all the time.

• That is the great secret of it all, ladies—men are selfish, thoroughly selfish; the only way to bring them to reason is to make them *uncomfortable*, for to be comfortable is their one great aim in life. Mind you, they have very strange ideas of comfort. My second husband's idea of earthly bliss was to go to sleep over the fire after dinner, with his heels resting on the mantelpiece; which, of course, no lady respectably brought up, and accustomed to the usages of good society, could tolerate for one instant.

"Septimus," I said, severely, the first time he did it, "I was under the impression I had married a gentleman, who knew how to behave in the society of ladies." He put his feet down. The next time he was going to do it, a look from me sufficed to prevent the contemplated breach of etiquette.

There is a very bad habit most husbands get into, my dears, or will get into, if you are foolish enough to let them, and that is going out to dine without their wives, and coming home late. Now, if a husband stays out late, it is ten chances to one he will return home intoxicated. It is, therefore, in the interests of morality that masculine dissipation should be promptly and effectively dealt with. I adopted a capital plan with my third husband, who exhibited at first a distinct tendency in that direction, which I will explain to you. If he came home sober, I pretended he was tipsy, and lectured him accordingly. Of course, he was very tired and wanted to go to sleep, so that my temperance admonitions and advice generally were very unacceptable; and I can tell you I kept them up long enough to make him regret he had gone out at all. I never let him off under an hour and a half's lecture, having myself taken the precaution to enjoy forty winks before his return. If, on the other hand, he really did come back intoxicated, I said nothing until the following day, when I insisted on his listening to a good long temperance sermon; and I followed that up by making him read a prize Blue-Ribbon story to me in the evening, instead of falling asleep over the newspaper, as he preferred. In three months, ladies, he had taken the pledge and joined the Teetotal Movement, since which he has only exceeded on two occasions.

Thus you see how easy it is, by firmness, tact, and superiority of intellect, to tame the most brutal of all created animals; but it is necessary for a wife, who wishes to do her share of the good work, to unite the wisdom of the serpent to the courage of the lioness—to join the firmness of Draco to the subtlety of Minerva.

Then, and then only, will Man be brought into proper subjection; then, and then only, will woman assume the position for which she is intended by Nature; then, and then only, will our homes and lives be made happy—when the wives go forth and rule the world, and the husbands sew on the buttons, wash up the tea-things, and mind the baby!

W. SAPTE, Jun.

From "Our Smoking Co.-er."

By permission of the Author, and
Messrs. CARBON & COMERFORD.

SIR LEO.

(A Family Legend.)

Not a cheek there but turned pale
As the Baron told his tale,
In such grim and ghastly colours was it painted;
Lords and ladies held their breath,
He had frightened them to death,
And three maiden aunts screamed suddenly and fainted.

But Sir Leo only laughed,
As a brimming bowl he quaffed:
"Your story, Baron, charms me beyond measure;
"Ghosts and goblins! nonsense! bah!
"Haunted chamber! ha! ha! ha!
"I will pass a night or two in it with pleasure."

Then the Baron with a frown:
"Knights and nobles of renown,
"Friend and comrade, brother, relative, and stranger,
"Each and all my council spurned,
"And not one of them returned,
"Gallant Leo—so I warn you of your danger."

Not a nerve or finger shook,
As his taper up he took,
And paced down the long dim corridor undaunted;
Dust had gathered on the floor,
Cobwebs hung about the door,
And therefigured on one panel the word "Haunted."

"Au revoir," the Baron said,
As he bowed his guest to bed:
"Ill-luck betide the chamber and the story!"
And then back again they go
To the wassail hall below:
"Far better he fell on the field of glory."

As the castle bell tolled "One!"
Some dark deed must have been done,
For there were shrieks, and groans, and noises
without number;
Every listener's blood ran chill,
And then all again was still:
What horrid sounds were those that broke their
slumber?

"Comes he not to break his fast?"
Nearly ended the repast,
Still Sir Leo does not put in an appearance;
So they climb the castle stairs,
Each repeating a few prayers,
And invoking some small saintly interference.

They have reached the haunted room,
They are gazing through the gloom,
Prying, peeping over one another's shoulder;
Peering in, on muffled tread,
Between the hangings of the bed,
Dropping piecemeal—left to mildew and to moulder.

From a black beam overhead,
By a rope of filmy thread,
Keenly watching with an eye of cold suspicion,
Hung a spider, undismayed,
Wondering why this sudden raid,
What the object of this sudden expedition.

Not a movement, not a sound,
Though the tapestry around
Seemed to stir with a soft stealthy undulation;
Once—twice they saw it wave,
But all was silent as the grave,
All was breathless as the hour before Creation!

No Sir Leo found they here,
But his naked sword lay near,
And his helmet cloven cleanly down the centre;
With a dagger, snapped in two,
And a pool of purple hue,
By a closet that none dare approach or enter.

Then the bells rang startling peals,
And they all took to their heels,
For they heard a most unearthly noise and clatter
Tumbling down the polished flights,
Fearing other dreadful sights,
And not waiting to learn more about the matter.

* * * * *

Though a century has flown,
Nothing more was ever known
Of Sir Leo, all is mystery and wonder;
But his rusty sword lies there,
And some tufts of tangled hair,
And the dagger-haft, and helmet split asunder.

Let his rusty sword remain,
And the dagger, and the stain,
Where the red blood wore itself a ruby channel;
With the dust upon the floor,
And the cobwebs round the door,
And that terrible announcement on its panel!

LINDON MEADOWS.
(REV. CHAS. B. GREATREX.)

By permission of the Author.

THE BELLS OF SHANDON.

With deep affection
And recollection
I often think of
Those Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
Their magic spells.
On this I ponder
Where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder,

Sweet Cork, of thee;
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the river Lee.

I've heard bells chiming
Full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in
Cathedral shrine,
While at a glib rate
Brass tongues would vibrate—
But all their music
Spoke naught like thine;
For memory dwelling
On each proud swelling
Of the belfry knelling
Its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the river Lee.

I've hear bells tolling
Old "Adrian's Mole," in
Their thunder rolling
From the Vatican,
And symbols glorious
Swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets
Of Notre Dame;
But thy sounds were sweeter
Than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber,
Pealing solemnly;
O! the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters
Of the river Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow,
While on tower and kiosko,
In Saint Sophia
The Turkman gets,
And loud in air
Calls men to prayer
From the tapering summit
Of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom
I freely grant them;
But there is an anthem
More dear to me,—
'Tis the bells of Shandon
That sound so grand on
The peaceful waters
Of the river Lee.

• REV. FRANCIS MAHONEY.

MOSES' MOTHER-IN-LAW.

DURING a religious controversy between Peter Lamb and some of his friends, one of the latter asserted that Peter didn't know who was the mother-in-law of Moses, and that he couldn't ascertain. Peter offered to bet that he could find out, and the wager was accepted. After searching in vain through the Scriptures, Mr. Lamb concluded to go around and interview Deacon Jones about it. The Deacon is head man in the gas office, and in the office there are half a dozen small windows, behind which sit clerks to receive money. Applying at one of these, Mr. Lamb said:

"Is Deacon Jones in?"

"What's your business?"

"Why, I want to find out the name of Moses'——"

"Don't know anything about it. Look in the directory;" and the clerk slammed the window shut.

Then Peter went to the next window and said:
"I want to see Mr. Jones a minute."

"What for?"

"I want to see if he knows Moses'——"

"Moses who?"

"Why, Moses, the Bible Moses—if he knows——"

"Patriarchs don't belong in this department. Apply across the street at the Christian Association Rooms;" and then the clerk closed the window.

At the next window Mr. Lamb said:

"I want to see Deacon Jones a minute in reference to a matter about Moses."

"Want to pay his gas bill? What's the last name?"

"Oh no. I mean the first Moses, the original one."

"Anything the matter with his meter?"

"You don't understand me. I refer to the Hebrew prophet. I want to see——"

"Well, you can't see him here. This is the gas-office. Try next door."

At the adjoining window Mr. Lamb said:

"Look here! I want to see Deacon Jones a minute about the prophet Moses, and I wish you'd tell him so."

"No, I won't," replied the clerk. "He's too busy to be bothered with anything of that kind."

"But I must see him," said Peter. "I insist on seeing him. The fact of the matter is, I've got a bet about Moses'——"

"Don't make any difference what you've got; you can't see him."

"But I will. I want you to go and tell him I'm here, and that I wish for some information respecting Moses. I'll have you discharged if you don't go."

"Don't care if you want to see him about all the children of Israel, and the Pharaohs and Nebuchadnezzars. I tell you you can't. That settles it. Turn off your gas and quit."

Then Peter resolved to give up the deacon and try the Rev. Dr. Dox. When he called at the parsonage, the Doctor came down into the parlour. Because of the Doctor's deafness there was a little misunderstanding, when Peter said:

"I called, Doctor, to ascertain if you could tell me who was the mother-in-law of Moses."

"Well, really," said the Doctor, "there isn't much preference. Some like one kind of roses and some like another. A very good variety of the pink rose is the Duke of Cambridge; grows large, bears early, and has very fine perfume. The Hercules is also excellent, but you must manure it well and water it often."

"I didn't ask about roses, but Moses. You make a mistake," shouted Peter.

"Oh, of course! by all means. Train them up to a stake if you want to. The wind don't blow them about so, and they send out more shoots."

"You misunderstand me," yelled Mr. Lamb.

"I asked about Moses, not roses. I want to know who was the mother-in-law of Moses."

"Oh, yes; certainly. Excuse me; I thought you were inquiring about roses. The law of Moses was the foundation of the religion of the Jews. You can find it in full in the Pentateuch. It is admirable—very admirable—for the purpose for which it was ordained. We, of course, have outlived that dispensation, but it still contains many things that are useful to us, as, for instance, the——"

"Was Moses married?" shrieked Mr. Lamb.

"Married? Oh, yes; the name of his father-in-law, you know, was Jethro, and——"

"Who was his wife?"

"Why, she was the daughter of Jethro, of course. I said Jethro was his father-in-law."

"No; Jethro's wife, I mean. I want to know to settle a bet."

"No, that wasn't her name. 'Bet' is a corruption of Elizabeth, and that name, I believe, is not found in the Old Testament. I don't remember what the name of Moses' wife was."

"I want to know what was the name of the mother-in-law of Moses, to settle a bet."

"Young man," said the old Doctor, sternly, "you are trifling with a serious subject. What do you mean by wanting Moses to settle a bet?"

Then Mr. Lamb rolled up a sheet of music that lay on the piano, and, putting it to the doctor's ear, he shouted:

"I made—a—bet—that—I—could—find—out—what—the—name—of—Moses'—mother-in-law—was. Can—you—tell—me?"

"The Bible don't say," responded the Doctor; "and unless you can get a spiritualist to put you in communication with Moses, I guess you will lose."

Then Peter went around and handed over the stakes. Hereafter he will gamble on other than Biblical games.

MAX ADELER.

THE AMOROUS ALPHABET.

Supposing A made love to B,
But had for rivals C and D,
And B, to all their pleadings deaf,
Was "spoons" on E, who courted F,
Supposing G, H, I and J,
All loved alike the lovely K,
Who smiled on L, but not on them,
While L himself was fond of M,
Then N and O had both in view
In spite of P, the hand of Q,
And R, completely "gone" on S,
Had left her T in deep distress,
While U, V, W and X,
Thought Y the empress of her sex,
Whose charms had even turned the head
Of staid and philosophic Z;
Suppose they all with jealous rage,
In deadly combat should engage.
The capitals would lead, of course,
The smaller letters march in force,
Suppose the diphthongs join'd the fray,
And stops and dashes pegged away,
Till, maimed and mixed, of form bereft,
No single letter would be left.
Oh, fatal fight! oh, fearful plight!
No longer could we print or write!

WALTER PARKE.

By permission of the Author.

SCENE FROM "THE LEGEND OF FLORENCE."

RONDINELLI. AGONANTI.

RONDINELLI [*discovered waiting*].

My bosom is so full, my heart wants air;
It fears even want of utterance; fears the man,
For very loathing; fears his horrible right,
His lawless claim of lawfulness; and feels
Shame at his poisonous want of shame and man-
hood.

Yet she endures him; she can smile to him,
Would have him better. Oh! heavenly Guinevræ!
Name, which to breathe puts pity in the air,
I know that to deserve to be thy friend
Should be to show all proofs of gentlest right.
Oh be the spirit of thine hand on mine;
Hang by me, like a light, a face, an angel,
To whom I turn for privilege of blest patience,
Letting me call thee my soul's wife!

He comes.

[*Enter AGOLANTI.*]

AGO. I recognise the Signor Rondinelli;
And in him, if I err not, the inditer
Of a strange letter. He would speak with me?

Rox. Pardon me, I am sensible that I trespass
On many delicacies, which at first confuse me.
Be pleased to look upon them all as summ'd
In this acknowledgment, and as permitted me
To hold acquitted in your coming hither.
I would fain speak all clearly and Christianly.

Ago. You spoke of my wife's life. 'Twas that
that brought me.

Rox. Many speak of it.

Ago. To what end?

Rox. They doubt
If you are aware on what a delicate thread
It hangs.

Ago. Mean you of health?

Rox. I do.

Ago. 'Twere strange
If I knew not the substance of the tenure,
Seeing it daily.

Rox. A daily sight—pardon me—
May, on that very account, be but a dull one,
I pray you, do not think I use plain words
From wish to offend; I have but one object—such
As all must have, who know, or ever have known,
The lady, you above all others.

Ago. Truly, sir,
You and these knowing friends of yours and hers,
Whom I know not, might leave the proverb alone,
Which says that a fool knows better what occurs
In his own house, than a wise man does in another's.
Good Signor Antonio, I endure you
Out of a sort of pity; you understand me;
Perhaps not quite a just one. This same letter
Is not the first of yours that has intruded
Into my walls.

Rox. We understand each other
In some things, Senor Agolanti, and well;
In some things one of us is much mistaken;
But, one thing we know perfectly, both of us,
The spotlessness of her, concerning whom
We speak, with conscious souls thus face to face—
Signor Agolanti, I humbly beg of you
Well nigh with tears, which you may pity and
welcome,

So you deny them not, that it will please you
To recollect, that the best daily eyes,
The wisest and the kindest, made secure
By custom and gradation, may see not
In the fine dreadful fading of a face
What others see.

Ago. Signor Antonio,
When others allow others to rule their houses,
To dictate commonplaces, and to substitute
For long experience and uncanting love
Their meddling self-sufficiency, their envious
Wish to find fault, and most impertinent finding
it;

When this is the custom and the fashion, then,
And not till then, will I throw open my doors
To all my kind good masters of fair Florence,
To come and know more in my house than I do;
To see more, hear more, have a more inward taste

Of whatever is sweet and sacred in it,
And then vouchsafe me their opinions; order me
About, like some new household animal
Call'd servant-husband, they being husband-gods,
Yet condescending to all collateral offices
Of gossip, eavesdropper, consulting doctor,
Beggary paymaster of discarded page,
Themselves, discarded suitor.

Rox. [aside]. Help me, angel,
Against a pride, that, seeing thee is nothing—
[Aloud.] You know full well, Francesco Agolanti,
That though a suitor for the prize you won
(Oh! what a prize! and what a winning! enough,
Enough to make you bear with him that lost),
Discarded I could not be, never, alas!

Having found acceptance. My acquaintance
Not long preceded yours; and was too brief
To let my love win on her filial eyes,
Before your own came beaming with that wealth,
Which, with all other shows of good and prosper-
ous

Her parents justly thought her due. For writing
to her

Since, with whatever innocence (as you know),
And for any opinions of yourself,
In which I may have wronged you, I am desirous
To hold my own will in a constant state
Of pardon-begging and self-sacrifice,
And will engage never to trouble more
Your blessed doors (for such I'll hope they will be)
One thing provided. Sir, it is—
That in consideration of your possessing
A treasure, which all men will think and speak of
(The more to the just pride of him that owns it),
You will be pleased to show, even ostentatiously,
What more than care, at this supposed sad juncture
You take of it: will, call in learned eyes,
To judge of what your own too happy ones
May slide o'er too securely; will thus revenge,
Your wrong on ill mouths, by refuting them,
And secure kindlier ones from the misfortune
Of being uncharitable towards yourself.

Ago. I will not suffer, more than other men,
That wrong should be assumed of me, and bend me
To what it pleases. What I know, I know;
What in that knowledge have done, shall still do,
The more you speak, the greater is the insult
To one that asks not your advice, nor needs it;
Nor am I to be tricked into submission
To a pedantic and overweening insolence,
Because it treats me like a child, with gross
Self-reconciling needs and sugary fulsomeness.
Go back to the world you speak of you yourself,
True infant, and learn better from its own school.
You tire me.

Rox. Stay; my last words must be heard.
In nothing then will there be any difference
From what the world now see?

Ago. In nothing fool—
Why should there? Am I a painter's posture-
figure?

A glove to be made to fit, a public humour?
To bear you is preposterous; not to trample you
A favour, which I know not why I show.

ROX. I'll tell you.

'Tis because you, with cowardly tyranny
Presume on the blessed shape that stands between
us;

AY, with an impudence of your own, immeasurable,
Skulk, at an angel's skirts.

AGO. I laugh at you.

And let me tell you at parting, that the way
To serve a lady best, and have her faults
Lightliest admonished by her lawful helper,
Is not to thrust a lawless vanity

'Twixt him and his vexed love.

ROX. Utter that word

No second time. Blaspheme not its religion,
And mark me once for all. I know you proud,
Rich, sanguine during passion, sullen after it,
Purchasing shows of mutual respect,
With bows as low as their recoil is lofty;
And thinking that the world and you, being each
No better than each other, may thus ever,
In smooth accommodation of absurdity,
Move prosperous to your graves. But also I know
you

Misgiving amidst all of it; more violent
Than bold, more superstitious e'en than formal;
More puffed up by the public breath, than vital
In very self-conceit. Now mark me—

AGO. A beggar

Mad with detection, barking like his cur!

ROX. Mark me, impostor! Let that saint be
worse

By one hair's-breadth of sickness, and you take
No step to show that you would have prevented it,
And every soul in Florence, from the beggar
Up to the princely sacredness now coming,
Shall be loud on you, and loathe you. Boys shall
follow you,

Plucking your shuddering skirts; women forego,
For woman's sake, their bashfulness, and speak
Words at you, as you pass; old friends not know
you;

Enemies meet you, friend-like; and when, for
shame,

You shut yourself indoors, and take to your bed,
And die of this world by day, and the next by
night,

The nurse, that makes a penny of your pillow,

And would desire you gone, but your groans pay
her,

Shall turn from the last agony in your throat,
And count her wages!

AGO. *[drawing his sword]*. Death in thine own
throat!

ROX. Tempt me not!

AGO. Coward!

ROX. *[drawing his sword]*. All you saints bear
witness!

[Cries of "Agolanti! Signor Agolanti!"

[Enter SERVANTS in disorder.]

FIRST SERV. My lady, sir.

AGO. What of her?

SERV. Sir, she is dead.

AGO. Thou say'st what cannot be. A hundred
times

I've seen her worse than she is now.

ROX. Oh, horror!

To hear such words, knowing the end!—Oh dread-
ful!

But is it true, good fellow? Thou art a man,
And hast moist eyes. Say that they served thee
dimly.

SERV. Hush, sir.

*[The passing-bell is heard. They all take off
their caps except AGOLANTI.]*

ROX. She's gone; and I am alone. Earth's
blank;

Misery certain—the cause, alas! the cause!

[Passionately to AGOLANTI.] Uncover thee, irre-
verent infamy!

AGO. *[uncovering]*. Infamy thou, to treat thus
ruffianly

A mute-struck sorrow.

ROX. Oh God, to hear him talk!

To hear him talk, and to know that he has slain
her!

Bear witness, you—you of his household—you,
That knew him best, and what a poison he was—
He has slain her. What you all feared would be,
has come,

And the mild thread that held her heart is broken.

AGO. *[going off with servants]*. Pietro, I say, and
Giotto! away! away! *[Exit with servants.]*

ROX. Ay, ay, to justice with him! Whither
with me? *[Exit opposite.]*

LEIGH HUNT.

A glove to be made to fit, a public humour?
To hear you is preposterous; not to trample you
A favour, which I know not why I show.

1. Ron. I'll tell you.

'Tis because you, with cowardly tyranny
Presume on the blessed shape that stands between
us;

1. Ay, with an impudence of your own, immeasurable,
Skulk, at an angel's skirts.

Ago. I laugh at you.

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For woman's sake, their bashfulness, and speak
Words at you, as you pass; old friends not know
you;

Enemies meet you, friend-like; and when, for
shame,

You shut yourself indoors, and take to your bed,
And die of this world by day, and the next by
night,

The nurse, that makes a penny of your pillow,

And would desire you gone, but your groans pay
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Shall turn from the last agony in your throat,
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